



THE PRINCETON SEMINARY BULLETIN

VOLUME IX, NUMBER I NEW SERIES 1988

OPENING CONVOCATION, FALL 1987

Confidence in God at the End of the Twentieth
Century

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Karl Barth and the Postmodern Paradigm

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Patton of Princeton: A Profile

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Ronald C. White, Jr., EDITOR

Daniel L. Migliore, BOOK REVIEW EDITOR

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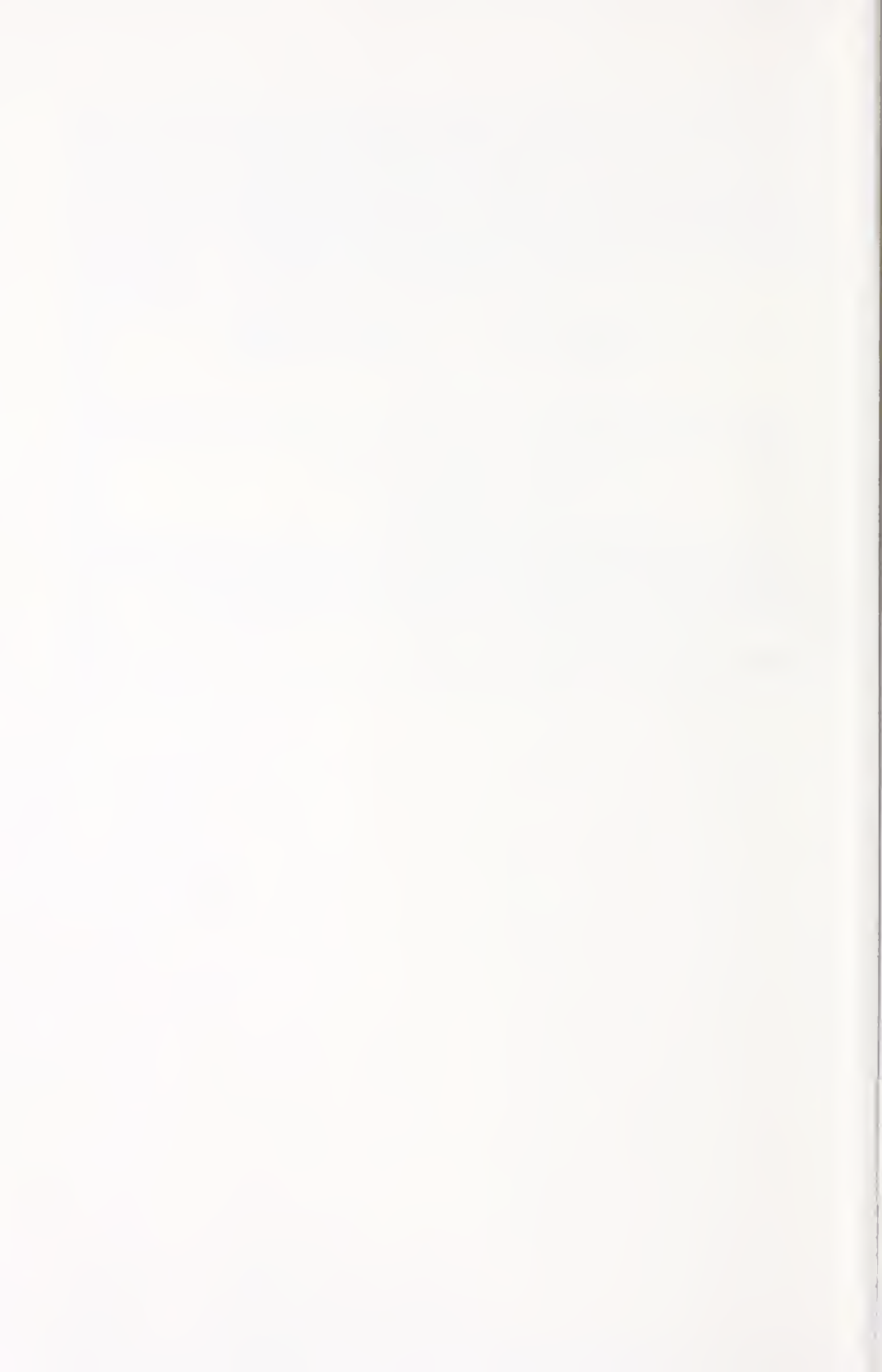
Ronald C. White, Jr.
Editor

Daniel L. Migliore
Book Review Editor

All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor at the following address:

Princeton Seminary Bulletin
CN 821
Princeton, NJ 08542

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Confidence in God at the End of the Twentieth Century

by BEATRIZ MELANO COUCH

A native of Buenos Aires, Argentina, Beatriz Melano Couch is a 1957 graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary. She has also received degrees from the University of Buenos Aires and the University of Strasbourg. She is presently professor of practical and systematic theology at Union Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires. She has authored books and articles in both Spanish and English on women in the church, liberation theology, and the dialogue between First and Third World churches.

Opening Convocation, Fall 1987

I AM HERE tonight to say that I believe the only way we can live a life of faith in the face of our absurd world is to have utter confidence in God—a God who has promised never to leave us.

How are we as Christians, as students and professors of Princeton Theological Seminary, going to live and transmit confidence in God? How are we going to keep our priorities straight and seek first God's Kingdom? We are living in apocalyptic times; thus, confidence in God is more urgent than ever. If we as Christians are going to make any difference in this world, our faith has to be relevant. And in order for it to be relevant, we must be open to learn—to learn not only from academia, but to learn from the world around us and from a faithful God who acts in history.

We live in a world where institutionalized violence and nuclear madness are manipulated by powers out of our control, haunted by the possibility of the absolute insanity of a nuclear holocaust. Three-fourths of the human race is not subject of its own destiny but manipulated by the lust of one powerful third.

Referring to this subject the Brazilian theologian Rubem Alves speaks in his book *Tomorrow's Child* of the absurd dimension of our society beyond liberty, dignity, and life. There is an absurd rationalization which he calls the logic of the dinosaur. The dinosaur with all its power and grandeur did not survive; only skeletons remain in museums. Other beings, however, even the smallest, still exist. The logic of power for power's sake implicitly carries its own extermination.

The demonic competition for power on the level of nuclear missiles, armament, spatial control, and control of the world's resources is not only pathological but sinful.

We are children of this absurd logic in which human life is cheap, and peace and justice are bad investments. In the logic of war and the lust for power, human life is reduced to merely a means to acquire more power. Where are Christian ethics when the transnational corporations and the totalitarian political powers of both left and right control two-thirds of humanity in a senseless struggle? They control production, health, the right to political self determination, the social and educational situation, and even racial discrimination. Sometimes they even justify their ethics with the Scripture—consider, for example, apartheid in South Africa. And what can be said of the structures of *institutionalized violence*, which produce hunger, prejudice, social and economical injustice, war, guerillas of the right and of the left? Only to mention some of its evil consequences.

We could continue to enumerate problems that are universal: they do not refer only to the Third World, which depends on the power play of the First World, or the North Atlantic; they are universal problems that can lead us to the total annihilation of humanity. Now at the end of the twentieth century we are on the road to this annihilation which is being produced under our very eyes and within earshot day by day throughout the entire world. We have different ways of justifying it or ignoring it. Therefore we became antikingdom and anti-Christ.

How can we achieve a biblical interpretation faithful to the text and at the same time relate it in a pertinent way to the historical moment in which we live? This is a fundamental question which implicitly includes another: How can we be more faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ? I believe that this point, Biblical interpretation, divides contemporary theologies, cutting right across denominational barriers. In other words, it divides the Christian Church in its theological task and historical praxis. This division adds yet another scandal to our schizophrenically divided society.

Our one hope is Christian unity and commitment to the God of history, the God of creation, the God of the exodus, the God of Jesus Christ the liberator, the God who will not abandon us. With an absolute confidence in God and guided by God's word and Spirit, we can be able to take part actively in the "birth" of a new society. Otherwise we will be part of the holocaust in which the human species will perish. Then there will be no one to tell others about our irresponsibility in evading the call of the kingdom, the call of the abundant life, the *call to absolute confidence in a God of mercy, grace, and justice*.

We must remember two things: interpretation, or hermeneutics, of the scripture must have a dialectical relation with the world to which it is di-

rected. That is, proceeding from the Bible to social reality and from social reality to the Bible there is a hermeneutical circle which never closes. If we begin with the Bible and then try to apply it literally, as has been done for centuries, we could run grave risks of heresy. If we start from social reality and seek answers in the Bible, we can make the text say anything we want it to. We could even convert the Christian message into an ideology; unfortunately we already have too many such examples in the Church. Secondly, we must remember that we do not approach the Bible in a state of "original innocence."

Theology indeed has been thought of as a task to be carried out as if one were working in a laboratory with test tubes that are one hundred percent sterilized and aseptic. That is false. For this reason we must begin with a *hermeneutics of suspicion*, as Paul Ricoeur would say. This French theologian and linguist underscores the necessity of exposing false consciousness, thought which is broken or wounded (*cogito brise or blesse*), which presents itself as the basis of all meaning. I would add to the consideration of this false consciousness which we all have, that we must listen to what God is saying to us through the oppressed, the exploited, the poor and insist that our reflection must spring forth from our suffering with our travel companions, with our people. Not a masochistic suffering, but a true Greek *pathos* which means: to go through with. . . . Concretely to accompany those who suffer because of the exploitation and oppression of the powerful of our society, just as *God constantly accompanies us*. By this I refer to our immersion in conflict and in struggle with others as God does. It is not important how difficult or dramatic the situation may be. Jesus promises and his promise is firm: "I will never leave you, I am with you always." This will enable us, as our professor Paul Lehmann frequently said, "to let human life be truly human," in a world where three-fourths of the population lives in subhuman conditions. Only if our reflection emerges from this type of commitment can we go beyond a simple condemnation of the enslaving structures in our society and commit ourselves to change and transform the contemporary situation and not simply condemn it. It is very easy to condemn war, injustice, inhumanity, and the lack of respect for life and then quietly stay at home as if nothing were happening.

I repeat, we must be agents of change in the world, not through our own authority, with a messianic complex, but by entering into the purpose of that God who invites us to confidence and who wants to give all of humanity abundant life. That is to enter into the purpose of the kingdom here and now since Christ's coming and do it with effective love. Do it with love

carried out in practice, and not with empty and vain words or with only some protest march.

In conclusion, our interpretation is realized through a hermeneutics based on suspicion and also through hope born from commitment. If this reflection is serious, it will show forth the contradictions within our own society, the contradictions within ourselves, between the Church and the gospel, between the Bible and certain academic theologies and help overcome those contradictions.

Just a word about the *truth* we seek in the Bible and in the world in order to be faithful to the God who offers us his company in every moment of life. How did the authors of the Old and New Testaments understand truth? In the Old Testament, truth was a quality which properly speaking belonged only to God. The Hebrew words used are *emeth*, *emunath* which signify "fidelity" (Hosea 2:20, Deut. 32:4). The verb *aman*, which is used more frequently than the nouns, signifies "to confirm," "to trust," "to be firm"; from this same root we have the noun "amen." That is, truth is a fact or an unalterable state, a quality inherent in God which is described later as the activity of God, with the result that we find truth and mercy together. It also refers to the activity which God demands of a human being. In the New Testament the Greek word used is *aletheia*, which for the Greek philosophers signified that which truly exists in opposition to that which only appears to be but has no real existence. The meaning of the Old Testament reaches the New Testament and makes it possible for us to speak of the truth as something which ought to be done (John 3:21, 1 John 1:6), life and truth, instead of something which is simply believed or thought. In the Johannine usage we also find that the truth should be understood as that which stimulates conduct instead of being a matter of pure contemplation. I repeat, something which we do, *we do the truth*. As a consequence, we can affirm that the truth is a divine and human activity, a divine and human proclamation, a divine and human experience, a divine and human power. When the Lord Jesus Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), he was clearly speaking about truth as an existential reality in the form of life, in the form of being.

As a result, we turn around the Greek philosophical concept which considered the truth as something objective, outside ourselves, at which we arrived through a particular methodology. Rather it is a concept of an incarnate truth, which is lived. The truth is Jesus Christ himself, it is God incarnate, whose inherent quality is faithfulness. It is confidence inspired by its own activity, incarnate in the Scriptures, in the Church, in the world.

We discover it when we open ourselves to the power of the Holy Spirit and we are touched by grace working through us and others. It is not something that we possess through a particular methodology, but rather something which possesses us. It is not something we aspire to, it is something *in* us. This notion of truth converts our pride into humble praise and gratitude for a gift given to us—a gift we have not achieved, and which therefore we do not monopolize; it can convert our research in the interpretative and theological task of a sterile and individualistic polemic into a way of living in a community *with* others and *for* others because we live with Christ and for Christ. “It is a road of love,” as Paul Ricoeur describes it with the humility that always characterizes the wise.

Now, in the midst of the situation in which we find ourselves at the end of the twentieth century, what does it mean to have confidence in God? Does it make any difference in our individual lives, in our churches, in our nations, in our international encounters, in history, to believe or not to believe in God, to confide in God? Or does it make no difference at all?

All the texts that we have read tonight from Isaiah to Matthew and Romans have as their *central* theme *confidence in God*. Isaiah tells us in the marvelous epic of the return from Babylon something that is nearly impossible: that a mother should forget her children. If even that might occur, however, God does not forget those who are God’s. This is the center of the biblical message, of both the Old and the New Testaments. When Matthew speaks about trust in providence, providence means the concrete action of God in our lives. I believe that among the many things that can be said from within these texts there emerge three types of important security: a historical security of final victory, a final security in our personal life, and a security in the final victory of the community of faith, “the faithful remnant.” That is, the triumph of God in history is the triumph of the kingdom of God over this earth, a victory which is completed and confirmed beyond human history.

A first consequence of the confession or affirmation of faith in God is a complete and final security. It is a complete certainty that, although we cannot comprehend or dominate the human events which dramatically surround us during the final part of the twentieth century, history is not cyclical. It does not correspond to a Hegelian type of analysis: a thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Rather it is a history which has meaning and direction in a world which is not explained by causes and effects. It is the place where God dwells together with his creatures. It is the home of freedom, of the Spirit, of creativity of the new, of the surprise of the definitive liberation bestowed

by God. As a consequence, even with everything that we said about the alienating factors which oppress us and which we cannot control or even foresee, this does not reduce our human horizons, nor determine the end of history. Instead, we are able to say, "God will never abandon us."

The gas chambers have not had the final word in recent historical holocausts such as the genocide nearly fifty years ago nor in today's genocides in the Third World, because the universe is the stage of human action and of the action of God. The famous Jewish writer Elie Wiesel told us in a lecture in Buenos Aires that he was the youngest survivor of the concentration camp at Auschwitz. When he was thirteen years old the Jews worshiped in the camp, but since they did not have the Torah they used him as the Torah and danced around him. The final word is God's; it does not belong to the powerful, nor to the oppressors, nor to the exploiters, nor to those who carry out genocide. How many examples we could give from Latin America, which is bathed in martyrs' blood, of those who have exposed their lives, believing and surrendering themselves to the will of God to be part of God's kingdom. We can mention the deaths of so many from torture, ill treatment, rape, and murder. So many hundreds of pastors, nuns, priests, laypersons, men, women, and children who have been killed for their faith in Jesus Christ and for their concrete, committed involvement with the liberation of their people.

This final security seems to contradict the concrete reality I have described briefly. It is however the transcendence of God within our immanence, it is freedom within all determinisms, it is security within insecurity, it is the miracle, the madness, the impossibility of faith, it is the scandal of the Cross. It is confidence in the One who promised us, "I will be with you until the end." It is the presence which turns history upside down.

Secondly, part of the Sermon on the Mount in Saint Matthew's Gospel, which is titled "Confidence in Providence" in the Jerusalem Bible, calls on each of us, it invites us to place all our confidence in Jesus—to look at the birds, to look at the lilies, to look at the fields. God takes care, but in spite of all this of which God takes care God invites us to seek the kingdom of God and God's righteousness and all these things will be ours as well. It is not that God acts magically, but that God invites us to devote ourselves wholly to the struggle for a new world, a world of love, of justice, of human solidarity that corresponds to God's will. Each moment of our lives is not the point of arrival, but is rather the point of a new departure, of a new rededication, of a new glimpse of the purposes of God in order to be able to say with confidence, "your will be done, and not my own."

Jeremiah (29:47) calls the exiles of Israel to "build houses, plant gardens, marry wives, and beget daughters and sons." As Alves says: "Jeremiah was cursed as a traitor and damned as a reactionary. . . . He bought a piece of land. . . . He rejects both the revolutionary illusions of quick delivery and the despair that no longer sees any future. . . . In captivity he keeps his hope alive."

A third dimension is the final security of God's victorious love in the continuous presence of Christ with us that we read in Romans tonight. John Mackay used to tell us: "Do not forget to preach and live the gospel with passion. In reality, we Protestants have passion for economy, money, sex, art, beauty, but we must be very orderly and meticulous so as not to show any passion for the gospel." We should have an immense passion for the kingdom of God, for justice, for dialogue, for peace, and for reencounter at a personal and international level. This requires not only faith, confidence in God, but also courage, decision, action.

As Protestants we have given a great deal of importance to justification by faith, that is to confidence, to belief in God which is more than mental belief. It is *handing ourselves over to God*. Paul Tillich talks about grace, describing it as the presence of God who accompanies us; grace is a reunion within our own selves, with others, and with God.

In conclusion, let me say to the students who today begin their theological studies, to those who are continuing their studies, and to those of us who are professors and have a double responsibility before them: may our teaching and our Christian practice be sound, clear, precise, a true praxis, demand what it may demand. (Let us not forget that in Latin the Acts of the Apostles is called *Praxis Apostolorum*.)

Instead of being experts of information and holders of degrees and honors let us be doers of the gospel, where grace abounds in spite of sin, where confidence triumphs over the drama of our world, where wisdom is valued above partial knowledge, so that we have a single goal and a single purpose: "Wholeness of Life." We are challenged as North Americans, Europeans, members of the Third World, north and south, east and west, members of a single body, which is the body of Christ, to a mutual liberation, a mutual access to grace and forgiveness. A mutual challenge to the tasks of the kingdom to which we are called, a mutual confidence in the God who created us and redeemed us in Jesus Christ. God is with us, Christ is accompanying us with such love—love that demands our soul, our life, our all.

Karl Barth and the Postmodern Paradigm

by HANS KÜNG

*Born in Switzerland, Hans Küng was educated at the German College in Rome, Gregorian University, and the Institut Catholique and the Sorbonne in Paris. He is presently director of the Institute for Ecumenical Studies and professor of dogmatic and ecumenical theology at Tübingen. An ordained Roman Catholic priest, he was named official counselor on theology at the Vatican Council by Pope John XXIII. A controversial critic, in 1979 he was dismissed from his church-endowed position at Tübingen. He is the author of many books and articles, including *On Being a Christian*, *Does God Exist?* and *Infallible*.*

LET ME BEGIN on a personal note. I cannot, and will not, speak of Karl Barth as I would of any great theologian or philosopher of the past, Hegel, for example, Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, or Harnack. I cannot, and will not, pretend to a lofty objectivity and neutrality, least of all in the case of Barth. Talking about him means for me, now as ever, talking about a person and theologian who has remained alive, who was combative—and pious precisely because of this—a man whom I met in a crucial phase of my life and to whom I am indebted for basic insights into theology (without ever becoming an uncritical Barthian). I have no intention of providing an academic (in the bad sense) abstract of our common history, nor of course will I deny the fact that I disagreed with him then, as I do now. In this retrospective I should like to follow a difficult *via media* between sympathy and distance, as I try to convey something of the vitality of this theologian and his theology, as I have seen it not only in Barth's work but in a great many encounters and conversations.

Any young Swiss Catholic from a traditionally Catholic family, region, and canton, growing up in the years after World War II, and more interested in the daily papers than in academic theology, not to mention *Church Dogmatics*, if he had heard of Karl Barth, could not help knowing one thing: this Protestant professor of theology at Basel had an unusually bad press, and not just in the newspapers of the Catholic camp. To be sure, his name was never missing whenever we Swiss "gymnasium" students counted up the internationally important names of our Swiss contemporaries. Karl Barth figured in the list along with Emil Brunner, Carl Gustav Jung, Arthur Honegger, Le Corbusier, and so on. No doubt he *was* a great man, this

theologian, who, with as much bravery as shown—unfortunately—by scarcely any of the bishops, publicly defied Nazism, and inspired and helped organize the resistance by the Confessional Church, along with the Synod of Barmen. Barth's "Swiss voice" for Germany's better self—even after his expulsion from his professorship at Bonn in 1935 for refusal to take the official loyalty oath to Hitler—offered guidance and encouragement to great numbers of Christians in the darkest of times.

But now, what about after the Second World War? Now wasn't he, the dyed-in-the-wool socialist and fighter for peace, showing exactly the same inexorably critical attitude toward the red dictatorship of Stalin as toward the brown dictatorship of Adolf Hitler? In 1946 as a visiting professor at Bonn, hadn't he urgently warned a certain Dr. Konrad Adenauer in a private conversation against founding a party based on a "Christian-Democratic" world view? Hadn't he even conferred in Berlin with the SED's (United Socialist Party of Germany) top men, Pieck, Grotewohl, and Ulbricht? Hadn't he taken two trips to communist Hungary (ceremoniously received by the Hungarian State President, only a short time before Cardinal Mindszenty went on trial for high treason)? Hadn't he kept up many contacts with communistic Czechoslovakia as well? Didn't this theologian now stand side by side with his friends Martin Niemöller and Gustav Heine-mann, doing battle against a supposed political-ecclesiastical restoration and the rearming of West Germany, which was aimed, however, only at containing communism? Wasn't he arguing for an extremely dangerous "third way between East and West" (he himself practiced it through visits to Eastern Europe), which had gotten him involved in a big public controversy with one of the leading Swiss politicians, Markus Feldmann? Really, this theologian did *not* have a good press, and not just because of the political positions he took.

Theological Confrontation

In addition, Catholic journalism had its own particular reasons for bearing a grudge against this Protestant. Although as early as 1920 he had hung a reproduction of Matthias Grünewald's Crucifixion from the Isenheimer altar over his writing desk, Barth had spoken out as a Calvinist reformer opposed to religious images, decisively (and successfully) attacking the use of new stained glass windows in the restored cathedral of Basel. He had also publicly committed himself with the same decisiveness (though this time without success) against the newly discovered medieval frescoes in the same cathedral.

In 1948, Karl Barth had been invited by his friend and coreligionist, the great Dutch churchman Willem Visser 't Hooft, the guiding spirit of the ecumenical movement, to take part in the first assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam. This was to lead to the founding of the Ecumenical Council of Churches, with Visser 't Hooft as secretary general. Prior to this Barth had scarcely participated in the ecumenical movement. But here in Amsterdam he learned—above all through conversations with Michael Ramsey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Orthodox theologian Georges Florovsksi—that in scholarly theology there had to be room alongside “dogmatics” and “symbolics” for something like “ecumenics.” “Disagreements within the agreement” and “agreements within the disagreements” was the motto: that is, to seek for differences of opinion *within* consensus and make possible forms of consensus *within* differences of opinion among understanding theologians of the various churches, so as to come a step closer to unity. But Rome—the pope—had refused to attend this assembly, as had the Orthodox Church of Moscow. And Barth’s reaction? It was typical of him: in a combination of Protestant freedom and Swiss impudence he proposed simply to pass on to the business of the day. But one must hear him in his original words to understand just what sort of man he was, how he thought and argued:

May this freedom (for the one Lord Jesus Christ, *despite* these separate Eucharists) also mean, then, for us, that the sigh or the outrage over the refusal we have received from the churches of Rome and Moscow will take up the least possible room in the negotiations of our first section. Why shouldn’t we simply see in this refusal God’s powerful hand raised over us? Perhaps he is using it to give us a sign, by which he aims to take away any crazy notion we might have of building a tower here, whose top would reach the heavens. Perhaps he is using it to show us how wretchedly our light has glimmered till now, that it evidently has not yet even managed to shed its glow into these other purportedly Christian regions. Perhaps he is using it to guard us from conversation partners with whom we could not be a community even in an imperfect sense because they, though for different reasons, are unwilling to make just this move, away from every sort of ecclesiasticism to Jesus Christ, without which Christians of various kinds and sources cannot even speak with one another and cannot listen to one another, much less come together. And God is perhaps using it precisely to put us in a very *good* position, by the fact that Rome and

Moscow, of all places, seem to be agreed in wanting to have nothing to do with us. I suggest that we now seek to praise and thank God for just this, that it pleases Him to block our plans as clearly as He has done! (*Evangelische Theologie* 8 [1948/49], "Die Unordnung der Welt and Gottes Heilsplan," pp. 181-88, quoted from p. 185).

Was Karl Barth an anti-Catholic agitator? That's how it looked to superficial observers. The polemic waged by published Catholic opinions opposing the obviously anti-Catholic Barth—this was after all the heyday of the last pre-conciliar pope, Pius XII—was surpassed only by the Catholic outrage over Hochhuth's dramatic exposé, *The Deputy*, which at the time led to street demonstrations in front of the City Theater in Basel.

But Karl Barth's critique of Catholicism had theologically deeper and historically longer roots. For he taught during the five important years of his second professorship (after Göttingen), from 1925 to 1930, in "Münster, that nest of clerics and Anabaptists":

1) There Catholic dogmatic theology was represented by the neo-Thomist Franz Dickamp, whom Barth often quoted later on;

2) There he worked intensively on Anselm of Canterbury and Thomas Aquinas;

3) There—in a novel gesture—he invited the Catholic theologian Erich Przywara, S.J. to come to a seminar discussion and personal conversations, where the unusually learned and clever Przywara developed his ideas—in the tradition of Augustine, Aquinas, and Scheler—on "God in us and God above us," on an ontologically given similarity, i.e., an *analogy of being*, between God and humanity.

In so doing, of course, Przywara only confirmed Karl Barth in his conviction that Catholic theology and the Catholic church had indeed kept more of the substance of Christianity than neo-Protestantism, but that they were guilty of the same fundamental mistake: they had usurped God's revelation, they wanted to dispose of grace, in a word—and this was, after all, the original concern of "dialectical theology"—they could not allow God to be God and humanity to be humanity any more. To that extent, then, "Roman Catholicism" is a "question put to the Protestant church," as Barth entitled his controversial theological lecture of 1928, because in the mirror of Catholic mistakes the same problems became recognizable within the Protestant context. Abruptly confronting Catholicism, Barth makes the case for a Protestantism that must concentrate most strictly on its evangelical

concerns. The world is the world, and humanity is humanity; but God is God, and reconciliation is in Jesus Christ alone.

As early as the 1920s and 1930s Karl Adam of Tübingen and Erik Peterson of Bonn, and then, along with Erich Przywara, Gottlieb Söhngen in particular had been the first to engage in discussions with the early Barth (the author of *The Epistle to the Romans* and subsequent writings). Around 1940, when the German voices had to fall silent, Catholic theologians were heard from French-speaking countries: the Jesuits Louis Malevez and Henri Bouillard, and the Dominican Jerome Hamer (not to forget the Dutchman Johannes C. Groot). But the majority of these works made little reference to the Barth of the monumental *Church Dogmatics* [KD] (which had only been taking shape since 1940); after the *Prolegomena* (Vol. I, 1-2) in the years 1932-39, Barth did not publish his *Doctrine of God* (Vol. II, 1-2) earlier than 1940-42, and then in the years 1945 to 1951 his *Doctrine of Creation* (Vol. IV, 1-4); the *Doctrine of Reconciliation*, begun in 1953, like his *Doctrine of Redemption* and *Eschatology* (Vol. IV, 1-4), was destined to remain unfinished. In the final analysis there was likewise no profit gained from the correspondence that Barth had after Amsterdam with the French Jesuit Jean Daniélou—one of the chief representatives in France of the “nouvelle théologie,” which was suspected of heresy. Speaking of Rome’s refusal to attend the Amsterdam meeting, Barth brusquely explained to Daniélou: “It was too much to ask us at the same time both to take seriously your absolute claim of superiority *and* despite that to long for your presence.”

Catholic Attempts at Understanding

The first really crucial figure on the Catholic side was another theologian, Hans Urs von Balthasar. At once a student of Przywara and Henri de Lubac, since 1940 von Balthasar (from Lucerne) had been residing, like Barth, in Basel. Von Balthasar had left the Jesuits because he felt a calling, together with his spiritual friend Adrienne von Speyr, to found a “lay order.” Von Balthasar would ultimately write the masterful book that made it possible for Catholic theology to break through to an inner understanding of Barthian theology: *Karl Barth: A Presentation and Interpretation of His Theology* (Cologne, 1951). Looking back from the perspective of Barth’s mature work, von Balthasar tried to distinguish between a “period of dialectics” in the early Barth (*The Epistle to the Romans*, 1919 and 1922), and a “turn toward analogy” (*An Outline of Christian Dogmatics*, 1927), which had finally been extended by Barth to the “plenitude of analogy” (from Vol. II of KD).

Von Balthasar called attention to the artful structure and intellectual-linguistic power of Barthian theology that can be compared only to Schleiermacher's. He showed how in a radical scheme of christological foundations creation and covenant become interwoven, how this leads to a new understanding of humanity as God's partner, to a novel doctrine of sin and reconciliation. The Catholic von Balthasar was fascinated above all by Barth's reinterpretation of predestination, which "sublates" the Augustinian-Calvinistic dualism (a part of humanity is preselected for bliss, another part for hell) into a Christian universalism that almost reminds us of Origen: in this way the Christ-center is mediated by an all-embracing unity of redemption. This is a christocentrism that should now make possible a new accent on the relationship between faith and knowledge, nature and grace, judgment and redemption—for Protestants and Catholics in equal measure. Yet what does that mean?

In the Foreword to the first volume of KD (1932) we read the famous-notorious sentences (paying no heed to Przywara): "I regard the *analogy of being* as *the* invention of the Antichrist, and think that *on account of it* one cannot become a Catholic. In saying this, I venture at the same time to rate all other reasons one might have against becoming a Catholic as myopic and trivial." We can understand this polemic against the analogy of being, which "levels" God and humanity, as purely anti-Christian only if we recognize that it takes a stand on two fronts. To be sure, Barth is protesting here first of all against the sort of Roman Catholicism that, in the train of scholasticism and the First Vatican Council, coordinates God and humanity and thereby sets up an interplay between humanity and God, nature and grace, reason and faith, philosophy and theology. Just how fateful all this was, Barth thought, could be seen in the Catholic marian dogmas, and in the Catholic understanding of Scripture, tradition, and the infallible magisterium of the pope. "It is precisely in the doctrine and cult of Mary that we see so graphically the presence of the heresy that makes all the other heresies clear" (KD, I/2, 157), said Barth; and his critique of the "erring papal church" (KD I/2, 607), which, when all is said and done, "declares itself identical to God's revelation" could not have struck with a sharper edge (cf. KD I/2, 606-52). But all this was involved with what he saw as the disastrous Catholic "flattening out" of God and humanity under the auspices of a leveling concept of being. Barth felt he had to protest against such thinking in the name of a "totally other" God, in the name of God's godliness.

At the same time, however, Barth was no less strenuous in opposing the sort of liberal neo-Protestantism that, following the lead of Schleiermacher,

oriented itself completely toward the pious religious person instead of toward God and God's revelation. Barth thought it was no accident: on the basis of leveling "natural theology" both Roman Catholicism and liberal neo-Protestantism had made their peace in uncritical accommodation to whatever political systems might be in power, first with the Empire and its politics of war, and then again with national socialism. On account of this coordination of God and humanity, Protestant "German Christians" had seen in Nazism something like a new revelation and in Adolf Hitler a new Luther—linking together Christianity and Germanness—indeed a new Christ. On account of the analogy of being between God and humanity, prominent representatives of neo-Scholastic theology (such as Karl Adam and Michael Schmaus) also found that Nazism was not so bad because it aimed on the natural level for what Christianity achieved on the supernatural level. This showed all the political dangerousness of a "Christian" natural theology. This had to be opposed when the political situation became serious. The Synod of Barmen was the most visible symbol for this.

And yet the ironies of history: the most important theological result of von Balthasar's book was that the whole antithesis between the analogy of being and the analogy of faith, so strongly emphasized by Barth, was shown up as a *false problem*. Whatever may go on in popular Catholic piety, Catholic theology and the Catholic Church are grounded in faith, they cannot and will not usurp the grace of God. Barth had been taken in hand, theologically, by von Balthasar's meticulous distinguishing of the shades of meaning in the term "nature," and the more time that passed the more he had to concede this. In the mid-1950s when I, as a young man (worried by these problems, like many other Catholic theologians), spoke to Barth about this controversy, he showed he was a man not only of holy wrath, but of winning humor too, when he answered: "In theology you never know: Has he got me, or have I got him?" And with respect to the much disputed analogy of being, the sole reason one could not become a Catholic, he simply said: "I've buried it." And as a matter of fact—without, of course, ever publicly explaining himself—Barth never used the expression afterwards. But that in no way prevented backwards Catholic theologians (and sometimes Protestant ones too), who would have liked to see the schism in the Church grounded and secured not just with the pope, the Church, and the sacraments, but, more, with the Holy Spirit, with Jesus Christ, or indeed with God the Father in person, from lavishing loving care on the analogy of being as the actual point of discord dividing the Church.

But all this is a relapse behind von Balthasar, who besides had written in

the following year a boldly liberating little programmatic book for *Razing the Bastions* (1952), which likewise betrays Barth's influence. It was a book that came at the time like a loud, impatient trumpet blast, calling for the Church to drop its defensive posture toward the world—a position that von Balthasar, having become a court-theologian admittedly, seems to have left far behind him. Still, this evolution in the theology and church politics of my compatriot and first editor will not stop me from acknowledging, thirty years later, the fact that without von Balthasar's book on Barth my own work on Barth would not have been possible. I learned from von Balthasar that Catholic and Protestant tradition can be reconciled precisely in the areas where they are most consistently themselves. From him I learned above all that Karl Barth, *because* he embodied the most thorough and logical development of Protestant theology, also comes closest to Catholic theology. Totally oriented as he is, in Protestant fashion, to the Christ-center, for that very reason he has a universal, Catholic scope. He reaches out and offers the possibility of a new *ecumenical theology*.

Ever since the days of Martin Luther and the Council of Trent, one of the tenets of faith, an *articulus stantis et cadentis Ecclesiae* (by which the Church stands and falls), and hence a basic obstacle to understanding between Catholics and Protestants, has always been the justification of the sinner not on the grounds of good deeds but solely of faith and trust. If we could show that there was a convergence or, a fortiori, a consensus here, that would go a long way toward healing the split in the Church.

My work on Barth aimed at showing just this: that in the doctrine of justification, seen as a whole, we can recognize a fundamental agreement between the teaching of Karl Barth and the teaching, properly understood, of the Catholic Church; and that from this perspective there was no further basis for a schism between Protestants and Catholics. Sly as he was, Karl Barth wrote carefully in his covering letter responding to my book: "*If* what you have cited from Sacred Scripture, both old and new Roman Catholic theology, and then too from 'Denziger' and hence from the texts of the Council of Trent, really *is* the teaching of your Church, and can be confirmed as such (perhaps will be confirmed by the consensus greeting your book), *then* I shall no doubt have to hasten, in order to commune with the genius loci, to the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Trent. I have already been there twice; now I shall have to make a third trip, this time to confess with a contrite heart, 'Patres, peccavi!'"

My book *Justification* (1957) was not placed, as some had hoped and some had feared, on the Index of Forbidden Books. By 1971 it was possible for a

well-prepared document, released in Malta jointly by a study commission of the Lutheran World Alliance and the Roman Catholic Church, to certify that,

Today a wide-ranging consensus is emerging on the interpretation of justification. Even Catholic theologians, in treating the issue of justification, stress that God's gift of salvation for the believer has no human conditions attached to it. Lutheran theologians emphasize that the process of justification is not limited to the forgiving of the individual's sins, and they see in it something more than an outward declaration holding the sinner to be just. . . . As a foundation of Christian freedom over against legal conditions for receiving salvation the message of justification must continually be broached anew as a momentous explanation of the core of the Gospel (in *Herder-Korrespondenz* 25, 1971, p. 539).

Thus the confirmation from Rome was there before us. Karl Barth, of course, no longer had the opportunity of going on pilgrimage to Trent, since he had been dead for three years.

Ecumenical Understanding

The message of justification "as a foundation of Christian freedom over against legal conditions for receiving salvation" naturally has radical consequences. This is true not just for the individual, but also for the Church, which has meaning only as a community of believers that keeps being invested anew with the right to live on the grace, forgiveness, and liberation of God. That is why "the Church is always to be reformed" (*Ecclesia semper reformanda*).

Barth's intentions, then, were thoroughly programmatic—in the face of both liberal and Kierkegaardian individualism—when he changed his original title *Christian Dogmatics* (the false start of 1927) to *Church Dogmatics*. He did this not only to fight against the facile use of the word "Christian," but above all—despite the "lamentations over the general course of my development"—to make it clear that dogmatics cannot be some sort of absolutely "free discipline," but "one that is bound to the realm of the Church, where—and where alone—it is possible and meaningful" (KD, I/1, Foreword). Thus long chapters on ecclesiology can be found as early as the *Prolegomena* (on the Church's kerygma, on the Church as audience and as teacher), then in the *Doctrine of Election* (the election of Israel and of the Church), and of course in the three volumes of the *Doctrine of Reconciliation*.

There are all sorts of materials here on the gathering, the building up, and the mission of the Church through the power of God's Spirit, which awakens to faith, vivifies in love, and calls to hope; and on the one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church. And all this—although von Balthasar no longer takes it seriously—represents the evolutionary peak of Protestant tradition and the closest approximation to Catholic tradition: a Catholic ecclesiology, focused on the gospel and hence truly ecumenical.

Ecumenical understanding on both sides became difficult only when the talk turned to the *organizational structure* and the practical politics of the Church: to the meaning of the sacraments and especially to the theological understanding and practical exercise of church offices, the priesthood, episcopacy, and above all, of course, the papacy. Karl Barth was thoroughly fascinated by the enormous possibilities of the papacy, but he was repelled by its concrete form and practice: He used to say, "I cannot hear the voice of the Good Shepherd from this Chair of St. Peter." That was under Pius XII.

Karl Barth was profoundly moved by the pontificate of John XXIII, of epochal importance though it lasted only five years, particularly by the Second Vatican Council and the *double paradigm change* it introduced—the integration of both the Reformation and the modern paradigm into the Catholic church and Catholic theology. Barth was the man who had challenged me, as a Catholic theologian trained in the Roman style back then, to speak publicly about something so archetypally Protestant (and therefore suspicious-sounding to Catholic ears) as *Ecclesia semper reformanda*: I did this in a lecture at "his" university in January 1959—literally six days before the utterly surprising announcement of the Council. Barth had taken a lively interest in the conciliar reform program later sketched out in my book *The Council and Reunion: Renewal as a Call to Unity*; indeed he had even suggested this title. The Council then adopted the ostensibly so Protestant principle of the necessity of constant reform (*Ecclesia semper in reformatione*) in its Constitution on the Church and also put it into practice by endorsing many requests, on the one hand, of the Reformers (for greater appreciation of the Bible and preaching, of the laity too, going so far as introducing the vernacular into the liturgy) and, on the other hand, of the moderns (for freedom of faith, conscience, and religion, for tolerance and ecumenical understanding, for a new attitude toward the Jews, the world religions, and the secular world as a whole). Karl Barth began to marvel at the intellectual agitation that had broken out in the Catholic church, which seemed to contrast with a widespread rigidity in Protestantism. Touched not simply

by the human qualities of the conciliar pope, but by the deepest evangelical elements in him, Barth had no hesitation this time in saying about John XXIII: "Now I can hear the voice of the Good Shepherd."

For all that, he did not become a Catholic. He did not in any case believe in converting to other churches, but he held the highest opinion of the constant re-conversion of all churches to Jesus Christ. Anyhow in 1966 the new situation provoked him to travel to Rome. "*Peregrinatio ad limina Apostolorum*," he called it, a pilgrimage to the graves of the Apostles, after he could not accept an invitation to the Council for health reasons. In Rome, after conversations with various Roman authorities, he found his positive overall impression of conciliar Catholicism confirmed: "The Church and theology over there have swung into motion to a degree beyond what I had imagined" (*Letters, 1961-68*, p. 357). But Roncalli's successor, Paul VI, impressed him as a respectable, even lovable man, who was, however, somehow to be pitied. When he met Barth, the pope told him how hard it really was, to bear and handle the keys of Peter entrusted to him by the Lord. This was still before Paul VI issued his disastrous encyclopedia against "artificial" birth control; but the postconciliar dilemmas—which were the upshot of the conciliar compromises—could already be seen in the offing.

We don't know what Karl Barth thought of the two subsequent popes, who—in an expression at once of compromise and perplexity—wished to combine the names of both their very different predecessors, John and Paul. A few months after his visit to Rome—his creative powers having exhausted themselves long before his death—he broke off for good his work on *Church Dogmatics*. He hoped to publish just one remaining lecture fragment, from the fourth, ethical part of the *Doctrine of Reconciliation*. It was to be his last major publication. His great thirteen-volume work remained an unfinished symphony, like the *Summa* of Thomas Aquinas, who likewise had suddenly and mysteriously interrupted work on his magnum opus several months before he died. In his last, unfinished outline of a lecture, Karl Barth wrote that in the Church we always have to listen to the faith of our fathers: "'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,' 'They all live unto Him'—from the Apostles to the fathers of yesteryear and yesterday." These were the last lines written by the eighty-two-year-old Barth. The next morning, December 10, 1968, his wife found he had peacefully passed away.

In his last years Karl Barth often thought of himself as "outdated." He used to say, "Now I wish I was young again, as young as you are—then I'd go back onto the barricades." Karl Barth back on the barricades? On the barricades in the 1970s and 1980s? I have often wondered in the past two

decades where and how he would have gone onto the barricades, what he would likely have done, if he had become, not a Barthian, but a real Karl Barth, young all over again. And I should like to offer some reflections on this question, after addressing Barth's shift from confrontation with Catholic theology to attempts at understanding and finally to ecumenical assent to it. From Then to Now, in other words, but not in arbitrary hypothetical speculations about the "what if"; rather in objective inquiry and constructive continuation of Barth's theology: What now?

Karl Barth—Initiator of a "Postmodern" Paradigm in Theology

The first question here is the crucial one for every theologian: Where and how is Karl Barth to be incorporated into the history of theology? Is he the monumental (and scarcely read) "neo-orthodox," as he is almost universally classified—and dismissed—in America and in the Bultmann school?

Or is he the unsurpassable theological innovator of the century, as the Germans—far beyond the limits of the Barthian school—extol him and thereby block their own path?

My comprehensive, Catholic thesis argues against both the antagonists who would disqualify Barth, and the epigones who would glorify him. It maintains that Karl Barth is the *initiator* of—as we would say nowadays—a "*postmodern*" *paradigm in theology*. This means two things: first, I would like to make it clear to Barth's despisers that Karl Barth really is an initiator, indeed the *main initiator* of a "postmodern" paradigm in theology, which had already begun to set in back then. But, second, I would say to uncritical admirers of Barth that Karl Barth is *only an initiator* and not the perfecter of such a paradigm.

Three points can be easily proved from Barth's writings and from *The Life of Karl Barth*, as Eberhard Busch has exemplarily presented it, "from his letters and autobiographical texts" (Munich, 1976).

At first Barth was a vigorous supporter of modern theology. By nature he had a cordial attachment to the bourgeois world (from poetry and music to beer and fraternity life to the army). Early on he felt enthusiasm for Schiller's idealism and Richard Wagner's *Tannhäuser* "Proclamation." As a student of theology, who from his very first semester in the university had become familiar with the historico-critical method, he quickly chose Kant and Schleiermacher as the lodestars of his thought. And so he became the student of the great liberal masters: first of Harnack (in Berlin) and then, more importantly, of Wilhelm Hermann (in Marburg), a man who managed to combine Kant and Schleiermacher with a pronounced christocen-

trism. As an editorial assistant to Martin Rade at the liberal *Christian World* he dealt with the intellectual products of all the notable liberal figures, from Bousset and Gunkel to Troeltsch and Wernle.

But then Barth evolved into the harshest critic of that enlightened-modern paradigm, which, after a phase of strict Lutheran and Calvinist orthodoxy, took shape as early as the seventeenth century, won general acceptance in the eighteenth, and in the nineteenth century reached its classic stage of development with Schleiermacher; and with the liberal theology inspired by him took on its position of leadership. Barth's ten years of experience as the pastor of Safenwil (1911-21), an increasingly industrialized Swiss farming community with every kind of social distress, had led him, even before the First World War, to doubt the optimistic bourgeois faith in progress and the conformist spirit of cultural Protestantism. Indeed they led him to become a socialist committed to the cause of the workers. He realized that in the severe plight facing the preacher—empty pews and ineffective confirmation classes—all his scholarly knowledge about the Bible was of little use. And despite his respect for the modern liberal mentality he sensed that historical relativism had increasingly left Christianity drained and empty. But it was the outbreak of World War I in 1914 that, to Barth's mind, plunged the modern paradigm into a radical crisis: on the one hand liberal theology had completely betrayed its modern accommodating nature, when ninety-three German intellectuals, including almost all of Barth's renowned theological masters, with Harnack and Hermann leading the way, signed a public manifesto, identifying themselves with Wilhelm II's war policy and the surprise attack on neutral Belgium. On the other hand, however, European socialism had also failed completely vis-à-vis the war ideology, and in the end everywhere supported the war. Karl Barth's personal theology developed into a "theology of crisis," which in 1918 was dramatically highlighted by the downfall of the German empire and of control of the Church by the sovereign, by the Revolution in Russia and the social turmoil in Germany.

In the end Barth became the chief initiator of a postmodern paradigm in theology in the following way: in the many-layered crisis of the whole existing order it had become supremely clear to him that Christianity can in no way be reduced to a critically graspable historical phenomenon of the past and a largely moral inner experience of the present. In the face of the epochal collapse of bourgeois society and culture, of its governing institutions, traditions, and authorities, Barth outdid everyone in mobilizing the critical power of faith. And in connection with *The Epistle to the Romans* of 1919 and 1922, together with his friends Emil Brunner, Eduard Thurney-

sen, Friedrich Gogarten, and Rudolf Bultmann, Barth issued a programmatic call "in between times" (the name of a magazine they put out) for a shift to a "theology of the word," often called "dialectical theology." This meant a move

—away from the historical-psychological self-interpretation of the "religious" person and of theology as a science of history and culture, toward God's own word as attested in the Bible, toward God's revelation, kingdom, and deeds;

—away from religious discourse on the concept of God, toward proclamation of the Word of God;

—away from religion and religiosity, toward Christian faith;

—away from the religious needs of humanity (the modern "man-God"), toward God, who is the "totally Other," manifest only in Jesus Christ (the "God-man" in the biblical sense).

In the general political, economic, cultural, and spiritual upheaval after the catastrophe of the First World War the theology of Karl Barth—with Barth himself serving as a model for "theological existence"—introduced the paradigm change from the modern-liberal to what we can call in retrospect the "postmodern" paradigm, which at the time was recognizable only in vague outline. To that extent it is Barth—and not Ritschl, Harnack, Hermann, or Troeltsch—who deserves the title the "Father of the Church in the twentieth century."

In view of the crisis of the modern paradigm Karl Barth demanded and fostered a basically new orientation for theology. Earlier than other theologians, his thought, in its theological critique of ideology, saw through the despotic-destructive forces of modern rationality, relativized the absolutist claims of Enlightenment rationality, and confronted the self-consciousness of the modern subject with its self-deceptions. In short, his theology, earlier than that of others, recognized the "dialectic of the Enlightenment" and carried on an Enlightenment of the Enlightenment. As opposed to the liberal diffusion of the Christian into the universally human and historical, Barth posits a new christological concentration of salvation in Christ; as opposed to the cultural-Protestant accommodation to social and civic trends, he stresses the political and social challenge of the gospel. It remains a source of astonishment how Barth early on spoke out decisively against every form of nationalism and imperialism, the pernicious legacy of modernity, taken over and lifted to the level of absurdity by the totalitarian systems; how he

spoke out *for* a politics of peace and social justice, for a critical-prophetic attitude on the part of the Church toward all political systems.

Still a fundamental element in all this was a fascinating new theological thrust, which showed its power in 1934 against the quasi-religion of Nazism at the Synod of Barmen. This could be seen in the Synod's lucid confession, conceived by Barth, of Jesus Christ as the "one Word of God," alongside which "other events and forces, figures and truths" had no right to be recognized "as God's revelation." Unlike other theologians, who saw it as the necessary tremendous culmination of modern evolution, Barth was not blinded by Nazi-fascist totalitarianism. Instead he viewed it rather as the terrifying vestige of a modernity that urgently needed to be transcended, as the "end of modern times," to use Romano Guardini's phrase from after the Second World War.

Thus it is a complete misunderstanding of (at least the young) Barth to label him as neo-orthodox. On the contrary, it seems to me that even today in theology we must cling firmly to the broad intentions of Karl Barth: the biblical texts are not mere documents for philological-historical research. They make possible an encounter with the "totally Other." In the human testimony of the Bible we are dealing with *God's* word, which the individual may recognize, realize, and confess. Humanity is therefore challenged to do more than engage in neutral observation and interpretation. He is called upon for penance, conversion, and *faith*, which always remains a risk. At stake here are humanity's salvation and perdition. And the task of the Church is uncompromisingly to bring this Word of God to society through the human words of preaching. The Church's preaching, like church dogma, has to be wholly concentrated on Jesus Christ, in whom, for believers, God himself—and not just an exemplary "good person"—has spoken and acted. Jesus Christ is the decisive criterion for all discourse about God and humanity.

So far so good—more than good. Still the question must ultimately be posed to this theology as well: *How* are these broad theological intentions to be realized in a new age? Is Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, which as theology sought not to be revered but to be read and further developed, already the theology we need in the postmodern paradigm? It seems to me that a clear counterpoint has to be set forth here—and to do that we must return once more to the beginning of Barthian theology, to the early 1920s.

Karl Barth—Not the Perfecter of the Postmodern Paradigm in Theology

In order to assemble the most essential ingredients for his lectures, the former pastor of Safenwil and now professor of reformed theology at Göt-

tingen (happily he had been made a Doctor of Theology, *honoris causa*, by the University of Münster) fell back on the legacy of the Reformation (Calvin and the Heidelberg Catechism). But that was not enough. Whether it was chance or fate, in 1924 after his first two years of teaching the newly minted professor stumbled upon a dusty, long-out-of-print book that in any event became part of his destiny. It was *The Dogmatics of the Evangelical-Reformed Church* by Heinrich Heppe, from the year 1861; and it offered him the answers of old reformed orthodoxy on all dogmatic issues between heaven, earth, and hell. Thus there occurred in Barth's first lecture on dogmatic theology a shift backwards that was certainly not uncritical, but, with regard to the spectrum of dogmas often controverted in modern times, from the Trinity to the Virgin Birth to Christ's descent into hell and ascension into heaven, quite remarkable. Barth turned back not only to old Protestant orthodoxy, but also—where, in the final analysis, did this school draw its wisdom from?—to medieval scholasticism and the ancient writings of the Fathers of the Church. As for the other leaders of "dialectical theology," they were not unanimous in going along with Barth's shift. Rather they followed after, shaking their heads. The problem, of course, was not the falling back on patristic, medieval, and reformed tradition in itself, but the way Barth did this—simply ignoring, often even defaming important findings of modern exegesis, history, and theology.

Naturally that did not mean that Barth became some sort of orthodox Calvinist or Lutheran sectarian, much less medieval scholastic. His own theological approach and his specific theological epistemology were too original for that. After his *Outline of Dogmatics*, which he did not continue, he further radicalized that epistemology. The key work in this process was his book on Anselm of Canterbury, *Fides quaerens intellectum* (Munich, 1931). What does Anselm's "*credo ut intelligam*" (I believe that I may understand) mean for Barth? From the very beginning, he says, we must leap into the heart of the matter. We must not wish to understand first (the historical, philosophical, anthropological, and psychological presuppositions of belief) so as to believe later. Rather, it is just the other way around: first believe, in order to understand faith in the subsequent exploring of its "possibilities."

Faith is defined as the knowledge and affirmation of the word of Christ, which is, however—and here the problems start—very quickly identified with the Church's creed, with the confession of faith as it has evolved historically over a long period of time. This was now Barth's approach, based on Anselm: presuming *that* it is true: God exists, is one essence in three persons, became man, is now reflected on only *insofar as* all that is true. Thus

Church Dogmatics (with the stress on *Church*), which was published after the *Outline of Dogmatics*, now becomes the *Reflection on the Creed*, as already recited and affirmed. And so hardly anyone will be surprised to find a 200-page treatment of the Trinity, elaborated not from the New Testament but from church teaching of the fourth century, in so early a text as the "Prolegomena" to the *Dogmatics* (what has to be said, not "before," but "first of all"). If Barth does not quite ground this treatment in an ingeniously extended conceptual dialectic, at least he tries to make it comprehensible. Thus his fundamental thesis on revelation now has a thoroughly trinitarian ring to it: (§ 8): "God's Word is God himself in his revelation. For God reveals himself as the Lord, and according to Scripture this implies for the concept of revelation that God himself is the revealer, the revelation, and the being-revealed in both indestructible unity and indestructible difference" (KD I/1, 311) or, in biblical terms, Father, Son, and Spirit.

This procedure can be clarified by a comparison: Barth's radicalized theology of the Word, which swings within itself, so to speak, bears structural resemblances—for all the obvious differences in substance—to Hegel's philosophy of Mind (Barth always had a "certain weakness" for Hegel). That philosophy likewise circulates within itself and, moving forward in a three-beat rhythm, presupposes the totality of truth, calls for a similar leap into the heart of the matter, and brings us face to face with a similar alternative.

—*Either, Hegel* would say, one rises above everything empirical and abstract to truly concrete speculative thinking, and then as one "thinks things over" the truth of Mind dawns on one of itself—or one does not rise to this speculative height, and then one is simply not a real philosopher.

—*Either, Barth* would say, one submits—untroubled by all the historical, philosophical, anthropological, and psychological difficulties—to God's Word, as it is attested in Scripture and proclaimed by the Church, and believes, then, at that point, as one "thinks things over" the truth of revelation will dawn on one of itself—or one just does not believe, and then one is simply not a real Christian.

And for the Christian—Barth says now in *Church Dogmatics*, in his sharpest, but *exclusive*, christological focus—for the Christian Jesus Christ is the one incarnate Word of God, the *one*, the *only* light of life, alongside which there are and can be *no* other lights, no other words of God, no revelations.

Creation-Revelation: The Permanent Challenge of "Natural Theology"

Many theologians trained in Barth's work see no problems here. They are, after all, part of an in-group. For my part I cannot conceal the fact that I have and from the beginning have had difficulties with Barth's position from the standpoint of the great Catholic tradition (which on this point has also remained largely the same as the Reformation's). No, Barth's theology is too important, we cannot evade an objective confrontation with it. We cannot limit ourselves to a purely immanent paraphrase of Barth, however useful that might be in making Barth's theology come alive for the current generation of theologians (which is basically the purpose of a volume in the *Objections* series, entitled *Karl Barth: The Troublemaker?* [Munich, 1986], with contributions from Dieter Schellong, Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, Michael Weinrich, and Peter Eicher). But we can never be content with a mere internal correction of a conventional picture of Barth, while otherwise largely agreeing with this theology. To my taste, these objections to Barth's theology should have a sharper edge to them.

Thus we have to ask:

—If God's creation is no longer, as the young Barth argued in his early phase, merely an empty funnel for God's grace, if God's creation can now be taken with complete seriousness in the later Barth and viewed even as God's good work, so that it will be possible to write four volumes of *Church Dogmatics* on the subject, if all that is so, then why shouldn't this have consequences for a true knowledge of God based on creation, a knowledge accessible in principle not only to Christians but to everyone?

—If God, theologically-objectively speaking, undoubtedly stands at the beginning of all things, why must it be theologically-methodologically forbidden to start off, in preaching and in theology, with the needs and problems of the modern person, so as to direct our questioning from there to God, where the ontological and the epistemological order are not, after all, simply identical?

—If the biblical message is undoubtedly for Christians the decisive criterion of all discourse about God, why then should all discourse about God be dependent on the Bible?

—And, finally, if the negative statements in the Bible about the error, darkness, lying, and sins of the non-Christian world are taken seriously as a challenge to conversion, then why should we conceal, repress, or obscure the fact that the God of the Bible—and the New Testament witnesses to this

likewise—is the God of all men and women, and as such is near to all of them, so that non-Christians too (a point attested to as early as the Letter to the Romans, and emphatically confirmed by the Acts of the Apostles) can know the true God?

In response to such questions Karl Barth referred me back then to the third volume—in preparation at the time—of his *Doctrine of Reconciliation*, on *Jesus, the Light of the World*. And theologians have paid all too little attention to the fact that in this last, self-contained volume of *Church Dogmatics* (1959) the old Karl Barth—exactly forty years have passed since his *Epistle to the Romans* and exactly twenty-five years since the Synod of Barmen—does return to his harshly exclusive thesis: Jesus Christ “is the *one*, the *only* light of life.” But then, having repeated it, he goes on—with many precautions and without making, like Augustine, public “retractions”—to concede that in the final analysis there are, in fact, “other lights” alongside the one light of Jesus Christ (“tail lights,” as it were, of the one light), that there *are* “other true words” (KD IV/3, 40-188) alongside the one Word. Obviously a new evaluation of the knowledge of God from the world of creation and from “natural theology” is emerging in Barth’s late theology, a new evaluation too of philosophy and human experience as a whole. Indeed we find, in an indirect, concealed fashion, a new evaluation of the world religions, which Barth had earlier lumped together—even the grace and faith religions of Indian Bhakti and Japanese Amida Buddhism (KD I/2, 372-79)—and simply dismissed as forms of unbelief, or, worse yet, of idolatry and works righteousness.

All this means that in the end *Church Dogmatics*—which after the completion of the paradigm change from modernity to postmodernity reached back behind modernity (back past the modern critique to Protestant orthodoxy, scholasticism, and the Fathers of the Church) had involuntarily led to a kind of neo-orthodoxy—in the end this so cogently constructed dogmatic world had been, at least in principle, exploded (though most of the Barthians had failed to notice this). What Dietrich Bonhoeffer once criticized from his Nazi prison cell as “revelation positivism” had had the bottom knocked out of it.

This much should be clear from the foregoing: as early as the beginning of the 1920s, after fully revising the *Epistle to the Romans*, and then once again in the beginning of the 1930s, after repudiating and later entirely re-editing the first volume of *Church Dogmatics*, Karl Barth had declared that he could and would say the same things he had before. But he could no

longer say things the way he once had. I am convinced that if this Barth could once again go up on the barricades as a young man, he would say, just as he had back then, "What recourse did I have except to start all over again and once more say the same thing, but the same thing once more in a totally different way?" (KD I/1, Foreword). And so perhaps he would do what Tillich in the last lecture before his death pointed to as a great desideratum: he would try to elaborate a *Christian theology in the context of the world's religions and regions*.

Toward the end of his life, stressing now the humanity of God rather than simply his divinity, Karl Barth had become reconciled with his old comrade-in-arms Emil Brunner. Barth had quite needlessly broken with Brunner, simply because the latter thought he had to speak of a "point of contact" in human beings for God's grace. ("No" was the title of Barth's pamphlet written against Brunner in 1934.) The question one asks oneself here is certainly not an idle one: Mightn't this same Karl Barth perhaps have wound up also being reconciled with his great antagonist, Rudolf Bultmann? (Barth did make a programmatic effort to understand him, "Rudolf Bultmann: An Attempt at Understanding Him" [1953], but it proved a thorough failure.) Mightn't there have been a reconciliation, then, with the Bultmann who affirmed Barth's basic theological intentions (the divinity of God, God's Word, kerygma, and human faith), but was not prepared simply to abandon the key concerns of liberal theology, and for that reason absolutely insisted on the historico-critical method in exegesis and the necessity of demythologization and an interpretation of Scripture oriented to human understanding?

Criticism of "Theological Exegesis": The Permanent Challenge of Rudolf Bultmann

Nowadays there can be no question of deserting Barth for Bultmann. Replacing Bultmann with Barth is equally wide of the mark: both great Protestant theologians must be taken, in their fashion, as seriously as possible; both have their strengths and their weaknesses. And Karl Barth had clearly seen Bultmann's weakness ever since the day back in Göttingen in 1925, when Bultmann had read to him from Martin Heidegger's Marburg lectures, which Bultmann had heard and taken down. Now, he thought, theology had to turn in an existential direction and strive for an understanding of the gospel documented in the New Testament, just as it would try to understand any other great human achievement. Barth's criticism was not directed against the notion that Scripture had to be interpreted in terms of

human existence; he did that too in his way. Rather the point was that Bultmann, fettered to the early Heidegger, had committed himself to an existential reductionism: he dimmed the brightness of the cosmos, nature, the environment, in favor of human existence. He reduced concrete world history to human historicity, and the authentic future to human futurity. He neglected concrete society and the political dimension in his theology of Being-in-the-world.

Conversely, Bultmann early on caught sight of and noted Barth's weaknesses: Barth liked to withdraw from hermeneutical discussions, so he could continue working "as thetically as possible." After his shift to Protestant orthodoxy and Anselm in 1930, Barth went so far as to cancel an already promised lecture to the "old Marburgers" on the burning problem of "natural theology." This greatly angered and annoyed his friend Bultmann. And thus Barth aborted the long-planned discussion of their differences, which had by that time increased. Barth was forever more emphatically maintaining that he could do "theological exegesis," without actually denying the historico-critical variety, but also without really paying any heed to it. Barth also largely ignored the critical history of dogma in favor of the principle of tradition that de facto bound the Christian for all time to the Hellenistic conceptualization of the relationship between Father, Son, and Spirit—although, when he wanted to be, he was capable of making conceptual corrections in classical Trinitarian doctrine, e.g., substituting "way of being" for "person." Finally, contrary to his intentions, in his *Church Dogmatics* Barth had enlisted the aid of church tradition to carry out a restorational restructuring of premodern dogmatics that over broad stretches was lacking in exegetical support. This sort of approach to dogma, with its ties to a "bygone world picture" and its want of relevance to contemporary experience, could hardly succeed in "making the Christian message so comprehensible to people today that they became aware of the fact that 'tua res agitur' (this concerns you!)" (R. Bultmann to Barth, Nov. 11-15, 1952, in *Correspondence 1922-1966*, ed. by B. Jaspert [Zurich, 1971], p. 170).

As a matter of fact, in the face of the challenge of modern exegesis and the history of dogma, Karl Barth (like the Swiss army in the Second World War) had withdrawn into the Alpine citadel of the sixteenth and seventeenth (or the 4th and 5th) centuries. In this defensive strategy he was prepared, for the sake of God's freedom and independence from all human experience, to surrender the most fruitful parts of the country. And what would happen today? I believe that if Barth, by some miracle made young again, wished to complete in postmodern style the theology to which he gave

a postmodern inauguration, then Karl Barth would not be Karl Barth if he did not begin again from the beginning and, starting out from the recovered center, he did not try to advance in an altogether new way, with better strategic-hermeneutic cover.

In other words—and to drop all the military metaphors: he would once again “begin all over” in a far more radical manner and “say the same thing altogether differently.” He would take as his point of departure the historico-critically established biblical data—not only on purgatory, marian, and papal dogmas, for which he sharply criticized the Catholics, but also on original sin, hell, and the devil, even on Christology and the Trinity. He would in a word try to work out a historico-critically responsible dogmatics based on a historico-critically validated exegesis, in order to translate the original Christian message (in keeping with Bultmann’s demands, but without Bultmann’s existentialist narrowness) into the newly dawned future, so that it once again may be understood as God’s liberating word. He would speak of God in relation to human beings, of a “theanthropology” even, which the old Barth had in view, though in his youth he had denounced anthropology as the secret of modern theology blabbed by Feuerbach. It seems to me of the greatest importance and urgency that in this process the “historical Jesus” (without whom, as Ernst Käsemann says, the “Christ of dogma” turns into a myth that can be manipulated any way one wants) should be allowed to come into play, once again in a way totally different from that of Barth *and* Bultmann—for example, with regard to the true liberation of humanity in individual life, in society, and in the Church. No, there is no going back: neither to Schleiermacher nor to Luther, neither to Thomas Aquinas nor to Athanasius. Rather, together with Athanasius and Aquinas, Luther and Schleiermacher—with Barthian intrepidity and decisiveness, concentration and consistency—forward!

*A Critical-Sympathetic Rereading of Barth against the Background of
Postmodernity*

“We lack the consciousness of our own relativity,” Barth once critically observed (*Die Woche* 1963, no. 4), and with reference to his own work he could say: “I understand . . . *Church Dogmatics* not as the conclusion but as the opening of a new common discussion” (*The Christian Century* 1963, no. 1, pp. 7ff.). This new common discussion would have to take place nowadays under changed theological and social conditions in a critical-sympathetic rereading of *Church Dogmatics*. Such a rereading against the background of postmodernity, for all the criticism it voiced, would have to take

a constructive approach in bringing the grand themes and enormous richness of this theology into the contemporary scene, and in dealing freshly with them in the context of the world's religions and regions. Indeed, what an overflowing wealth this theology has in its teaching on God, creation, and reconciliation, which as time went on increasingly became not Reformed or Lutheran but ecumenical theology. What systematic power and profundity in the altogether autonomous and original penetration of central theological *topoi* such as the dialectic of God's qualities, the connection between creation and covenant, time and eternity, Israel and the Church, Christology and anthropology, concretely extended all the way into an ethics of freedom before God, in community, for life, in limitation. . . . This was radical liberation theology before all the theologies of liberation.

And, at the same time, with all its superabundant complexity, with all its uncontrollable profusion of material (9,185 pages in *Church Dogmatics* alone), this theology never lost its center. What Karl Barth said about the "great free objectivity" of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, the musician he loved the most, he could say about himself. His portraits of Mozart, both in *Church Dogmatics* (III/3, 337-38) and in his short piece on Mozart from 1956, are something like thumbnail sketches of his own theology. What he heard in this music was the chord he wished to evoke in his theology. Mozart's music, he said, was:

in a quite unusual sense free from all exaggerations, from all logical breaks and oppositions. The sun shines, but it does not blind, consume, or burn. Heaven arches over the earth, but it does not weigh down upon it, it does not crush or swallow it up. And so the earth is and remains the earth, but without having to assert itself in a titanic revolt against heaven. Thus darkness, chaos, death, and hell show themselves, but not for a moment are they allowed to prevail. Mozart plays his music, aware of everything, from within a mysterious center; and so he knows and defends the boundaries right and left, up and down. He maintains proportions. There is no light here that does not also know the darkness, no joy that does not also contain suffering, but conversely too, no terror, no rage, no lament that does not have peace standing by, whether close up or far off. Thus there is no laughter without tears, but also no tears without laughter (*Mozart*, pp. 38, 43-45).

Barth's theology too emerges from this mysterious center, which was for him God himself, who in Jesus Christ has graciously turned toward the human race. And because this God who became visible in the crucified and

risen Jesus was the center, this theology too can defend the boundaries, can let God be God and humanity be humanity. This theology also knows about the dark, the evil, the negative, the futile things of this world, and yet at the same time it is written out of a grand trust that the good and compassionate God will himself have the last word. In fact the demonic and tragic features of the world do not break through in Karl Barth's theology either, which like the music of Mozart stops short of the extreme limit. It is familiar with the "wise confrontation and mixture of the elements," which assures that every No continues to be borne by a great Yes. Anyone who hears this music, anyone who listens to this theology, "may feel himself to be the prisoner of death and the tremendously alive person that all of us are, understood and even called to freedom."

Why It Took 150 Years for Supreme Court Church-State Cases to Escalate

by ROBERT T. HANDY

During the bicentennial of the Constitution, Princeton Seminary helped co-sponsor a series of programs on "Religion and the American Constitution," of which this lecture was a part. Robert T. Handy is the Henry Sloane Coffin Professor Emeritus of Church History at Union Theological Seminary, where he also served as dean. Among his many publications are A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities and A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada.

I

IN 1955 Will Herberg, later to become a professor at Drew University, published a book with the title *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*. Many persons were startled and surprised by the work, and became aware of the meaning and significance of the pluriformity of American religion as if it were something recent. It seemed to be news to many people when he declared that "Protestantism today no longer regards itself either as a religious movement sweeping the continent or as a national church representing the religious life of the people; Protestantism understands itself today primarily as one of the three religious communities in which twentieth-century America has come to be divided."¹ That sweeping generalization was actually an oversimplification, for there were not three but a number of "religious communities," as America had become a Catholic-Jewish-Eastern Orthodox-Protestant-Pentecostalist-Mormon-New Thought-Humanist nation, to list only some of the major options. The pluralistic patterns in fact had had a long history on the North American scene. Three hundred years ago Thomas Dongan, the governor of New York, reported that:

New York has, first, a Chaplain belonging to the Fort, of the Church of England; secondly, a Dutch Calvinist; thirdly, a French Calvinist; fourthly, a Dutch Lutheran. Here be not many of the Church of England, few Roman Catholics; abundance of Quaker preachers, men and Women especially; Singing Quakers; Ranting Quakers; Sabbatar-

¹ *Protestant-Catholic-Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology* (Garden City, NY: 1955), pp. 139-40. On Herberg, see Harry J. Ausmus, *Will Herberg: From Right to Right* (Chapel Hill, NC: 1987).

ians; Anti-Sabbatarians; some Anabaptists; some Jews: in short, of all sorts of opinions there are some, and the most part of none at all.²

Though the religious situation in New York was then more pluralistic than that of most other towns of the time, nevertheless similar patterns were soon spreading in other parts of the land. Why did Herberg's book, not written until the middle of the twentieth century, come as such a surprise to so many?

To put the question another way: it was two centuries ago that the American Constitution was prepared with its provision in Article Six that "no religious Test shall ever be required as a qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States." Before half a decade had passed, the First Amendment was prepared and ratified, the opening two clauses reading that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . . ." Yet with very few exceptions it was not until the 1940s, a century and a half later, that the flood of church-state cases before the Supreme Court crowded its dockets, a situation which continues unabated to the present. Why the sudden upsurge of litigation appealing to the religion clauses of the First Amendment a century and a half after they had been ratified?

II

The effort to provide historical answers to those two questions can well begin with a brief description of the religious situation of the 1780s, when the Constitution and its first ten amendments were prepared. Rough estimates of the relative size of the eleven largest denominations in the new nation, based on what we know of the number of congregations belonging to each, point to the following picture: the Congregationalists had more than 700 congregations, while the Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Baptists held between 400 and 500 each. Then there were seven bodies varying in size from some 250 to about 60 congregations: Lutheran, German Reformed, Quaker, Dutch Reformed, Moravian, Mennonite, and Roman Catholic. The first ten in size were Protestant, the eleventh, claiming the allegiance of about one per cent of the population, was generally regarded by the majority as a despised sect. Thus the actual religiously pluralistic situation was minimized by the claim that it was the Protestant churches, despite their theological differences, that dominated the religious life of the

² As quoted by E. T. Corwin, *A History of the Reformed Church, Dutch* (New York: 1895), pp. 87-88.

nation, and the opinion that this was and was to remain overwhelmingly a Protestant nation became deeply embedded.³

This view persisted through the nineteenth century despite some dramatic developments. In 1783 the president of Yale, Ezra Stiles, predicted in a sermon that three denominations—Congregational, Episcopal, Presbyterian—would tower over all the others and set the religious complexion of the young nation for the foreseeable future.⁴ But how differently things turned out by the mid-nineteenth century, when the three churches he cited had fallen to fourth, seventh, and ninth places numerically, and three he would not have thought of mentioning in 1783 were the numerical giants: Roman Catholic, Methodist, and Baptist! He had no inkling that the small Catholic body would be so favored by trends in immigration, especially from Ireland and Germany, that it would become the largest single denomination in the United States by 1850. The Methodists had not even been founded as an independent church when he offered his prophecy, and though the Baptists were already probably the third largest group then, the prestigious president of Yale would have trouble seeing them as other than a lower-class sect. The latter two denominations had both participated fully in the waves of revivalistic fervor of the Second Great Awakening, and quickly surged numerically beyond such churches as the Congregational and the Presbyterian, which used the methods of mass revivalism with greater caution.

Though the barriers between the various Protestant churches remained high, and though there were many controversies and some dramatic schisms, they learned to work together to win America for Protestantism and to forestall what they saw as the Catholic menace through the pattern of the voluntary societies. Christians of differing backgrounds could join as individuals various societies for such causes as evangelism, home and foreign missions, common school and church college education, the publication of tracts and Bibles, and the reform of society. A central aim of what has been styled this "benevolent empire" of societies that came to be guided to a considerable extent by interlocking directorates was to make the United States a fully "Christian" nation as they defined it. They intended to undertake this work of evangelism and reform by persuasion only, thus professing

³ Estimates drawn from Edwin S. Gaustad, *Historical Atlas of Religion in America* (New York: 1962), pp. 136, 158-61, 166; see also Willard L. Sperry, *Religion in America* (New York: 1946), p. 282.

⁴ "The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor," in John W. Thornton, ed., *The Pulpit of the American Revolution* (2nd ed.; Boston: 1876), pp. 467-72.

to maintain religious freedom and the separation of church and state while striving to win everyone they could to their point of view. In politics they usually professed to be nonpartisan; it was unusual for one of them to call openly for a Christian party in politics, as Ezra Stiles Ely did in 1827 when he insisted that "every ruler *should be* an avowed and sincere friend of Christianity." Then, remembering the Constitution and the First Amendment, he added, "let Church and State be for ever distinct: but, still, let the doctrines and precepts of Christ govern all men, in all their relations and employments."⁵ It was also not very often that a leader in the movement let show the implicit coerciveness behind the rhetoric of persuasion, as Charles G. Finney did ten years later. This great practitioner and theologian of revival was, like so many of his time, also a reformer with special interest in the temperance crusade as he used his oratorical skill to persuade his vast audiences to give up drink. When faced with strong opposition, he once observed that "multitudes will never yield, until the friends of God and man can form a public sentiment so strong as to crush the character of every man who will not give it up."⁶

More typically, the representatives of the quest for a Christian America argued that their voluntary approach would be unitive and not divisive and would not infringe on religious freedom. One of the prominent voices of the time, scholar and editor Bela Bates Edwards, once declared: "Perfect religious liberty does not imply that the government of the country is not a Christian government. . . . Most, if not all of our constitutions of government proceed on the basis of the truth of the Christian religion." He was convinced "that this real, though indirect, connection between the State and Christianity" was steadily gaining. He was also able to argue "that entire religious freedom does not involve the multiplication of religious sects, to a much greater degree, at least, than exists in some of those countries where religious freedom is but partially, or not at all, enjoyed." He reported that there was as great, or nearly as great, a number of religious groups in England and Scotland with their established churches as there were in America. He admitted that there were thirty or forty sects nominally in the United States, "but six or eight embrace the whole substantially."⁷ Here one sees the painting of a picture of a kind of Protestant unity, one that was still

⁵ From *The Duty of Christian Freemen to Elect Christian Rulers* (Philadelphia: 1828), as cited by John F. Wilson and Donald L. Drakeman, eds., *Church and State in American History: The Burden of Religious Pluralism* (2nd ed.: Boston: 1987), p. 96.

⁶ *Lectures to Professing Christians* (New York: 1837), p. 90.

⁷ *Writings of Professor B. B. Edwards* (2 vols.; Boston: 1853), I, 489-90.

influential into the twentieth century and makes more intelligible the reaction to Herberg's famous book.

Edwards spoke as did his partners about Christianity, but clearly he meant Protestant Christianity, regarding with distaste and suspicion the remarkable growth of Roman Catholic Christianity. For him and for many others Catholicism was an alien in Protestant America, and as a "foreign" church it was a threat to their liberties. They brushed aside the protestations of the first American Catholic bishop, John Carroll, who many times spoke of "his earnest regard to preserve inviolate forever in our new empire the great principle of religious freedom."⁸ Such views were reaffirmed many times by Catholic leaders, but were rarely taken seriously by Protestants. When a leading Protestant theologian, Horace Bushnell, prophesied that their crusade would soon mean that "the bands of a complete Christian commonwealth are seen to span the continent," he meant a Protestant commonwealth, for the title of the tract in which that appeared was *Barbarism the First Danger*, and readers of his essay knew that the second danger was "Romanism."⁹ There were minorities all too ready to match such expressions with action, as in the burning of a convent in Massachusetts in the 1830s, and churches in Pennsylvania in the following decade.

The Protestant denominations found an important point of unity in their conspicuous support for the public schools—the common schools, as they were then generally known. In his famous study of America, Alexis de Tocqueville observed that though the sects differed in modes of worship they "preached the same moral law in the name of God."¹⁰ Thus the Protestant churches could work together on behalf of public education as a benefit to all and an instrument of morality in their striving for a fully Christian commonwealth. "It is difficult today," writes a twentieth-century scholar of education, "to recapture the tone of thought and feeling of those who saw the common school as an integral part of their crusade to create the Kingdom of God across the land."¹¹ By mid-century, they had found means to advance their many causes in a way they found consistent with the nation's basic constitutional documents.

⁸ As quoted by Peter Guilday, *The Life and Times of John Carroll* (2 vols.; New York: 1922), I, 368.

⁹ *Barbarism the First Danger: A Discourse for Home Missions* (New York: 1847), quotation on p. 32.

¹⁰ *Democracy in America*, Bradley edition (2 vols.; New York: 1945), I, 103.

¹¹ "The Kingdom of God and the Common School," *Harvard Educational Review*, XXXVI (1966), 455.

III

The tensions aroused by the slavery issue and the Civil War sidetracked the quest for a "Christian" America, but it was soon renewed. One of the clearest illustrations of its continuation was Grant's "peace policy" in Indian affairs, put into effect in 1869. This allowed the churches to control the government agents on Indian reservations and greatly expanded the program of federal aid to missions and schools. Only seven of the seventy-three agencies were in the hands of Catholics, despite the extent of their work on the reservations. As one recent scholar, Robert H. Keller, has summarized the way the peace policy worked, it "replaced the spoils system with church patronage, provided federal support for sectarian missions and worship, violated the constitutional ban against religious tests for public office, and . . . denied religious liberty as guaranteed by the First Amendment." He concluded that it "can be viewed equally as the culmination of the idea of a Christian Commonwealth and as a flagrant violation of the First Amendment, but the second probability simply did not occur to many people in the 1870s."¹² The policy was terminated in 1882, but some of its arrangements were continued in the provision for contract schools under church auspices. Small wonder that the famous British observer of American life Lord James Bryce could say in 1888 that "Christianity is understood to be, though not the legally established religion, yet the national religion."¹³ The leaders of American Protestantism also felt themselves to be a part of a world movement destined to win; as one theologian put the matter in 1890, "the future of the world seems to be in the hands of the three great Protestant powers—England, Germany, and the United States. The old promise is being fulfilled; the followers of the true God are inheriting the world."¹⁴ It sounds strange to our ears now to read in a Supreme Court decision an obiter dictum about how Christian the nation was. The words were written by Associate Justice David J. Brewer, but no dissent was recorded, so the prestige of the Court stood behind the opinion. The passage called attention to the various state constitutions which provided "organic utterances" which "speak the voice of the entire people" that the Christian religion was part of the common law, and summarized with a list of particulars:

¹² *American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy, 1869-82* (Lincoln, NE: 1983), pp. 176, 213.

¹³ *The American Commonwealth* (3 vols.; London: 1888), III, 474.

¹⁴ Lewis French Stearns, *The Evidence of Christian Experience* (New York: 1890), p. 366.

If we pass beyond these matters to a view of American life as expressed by its laws, its business, its customs, and its society, we find everywhere a recognition of the same truth. Among other matters note the following: The form of oath universally prevailing, concluding with an appeal to the Almighty; the custom of opening sessions of all deliberative bodies and most conventions with prayer; the prefatory words of all wills, "In the name of God, amen"; the laws respecting the observance of the Sabbath, with the general cessation of all secular business, and the closing of courts, legislatures, and other similar public assemblies on that day; the churches and church organizations which abound in every city, town, and hamlet; the multitude of charitable organizations existing everywhere under Christian auspices; the gigantic missionary associations, with general support, and aiming to establish Christian missions in every quarter of the globe. These, and many other matters which might be noticed, add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterances that this is a Christian nation.¹⁵

Looking back on those years, historian Sidney Mead observed that "under the system of official separation of church and state the denominations eventually found themselves as completely identified with nationalism and their country's political and economic systems as had ever been known in Christendom."¹⁶

IV

All during the last half of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, the population was rapidly increasing, from 17 million in 1850 to more than four times that number in 1900, 76 million, and then doubling to 151 million in 1950. As streams of immigrants brought mounting numbers from central, southern, and eastern Europe the Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Jewish elements in the nation increased markedly. The number of Protestant denominations also multiplied for a variety of reasons, including immigration, schisms over slavery and race, the burgeoning of the black denominations, the increase of new thought and other harmonial groups, and the impact of the Holiness and Pentecostal movements. All this meant a dramatic increase in the pluriformity of religion in America, and some challenges to the assumptions of the older, well-entrenched churches. The rapidly growing

¹⁵ As quoted by Anson Phelps Stokes, *Church and State in the United States* (3 vols.; New York: 1950), III, 571-72. Brewer later wrote *The United States a Christian Nation* (Philadelphia: 1905).

¹⁶ *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America* (New York: 1963), p. 157.

giant among churches, the Roman Catholic, by the turn of the century far larger than its nearest numerical rivals, especially objected to the concept of a Christian America that left it out. The religious overtones of the supposedly non-sectarian but actually predominantly Protestant public schools were especially troubling to the Catholics. In 1884 the hierarchy launched a determined drive to expand the parochial school system wherever there was a Catholic parish. This led to some ugly reactions, and to the formation of the American Protective Association three years later, for to many Protestants and some others the concern that every Catholic child have an opportunity for parochial school education appeared as an attack on the common schools.¹⁷ A casualty of the increased Catholic-Protestant tension was the end of the last vestige of the Grant peace policy, the contract schools. Francis Paul Prucha concluded that "the close ties between the churches and the government in Indian matters were finally cut by the sharp knife of intolerance" as Protestants chose to withdraw from the arrangement, "preferring to lose their own meager benefits than to see the Catholics profit."¹⁸ Keller observed that "not until American Catholicism began to grow in size did 'strict separation' become a constitutional doctrine."¹⁹

At the dawn of the new century, however, Protestant leaders were confident about the future. They faced the new century with a burst of enthusiasm, energy, and hope, buoyed up and given a sense of unity by an expectation of the coming kingdom of God, and confident that their dream of a Christian America would soon be fulfilled. When the Federal Council of Churches was formed in 1908 the delegates from more than thirty Protestant denominations were welcomed by a prominent Presbyterian, William H. Roberts, who declared that the new organization would seek "the thorough Christianization of our country" and that it would stand for "speedy Christian advance toward World Conquest."²⁰ The passage of the Eighteenth Amendment on prohibition, backed by much of Protestant America, seemed to be a step along the way, and the defeat of a Catholic candidate for president in 1928 made the Protestant future seem secure.

¹⁷ See Lloyd P. Jorgenson, *The State and the Non-Public School, 1825-1925* (Columbia, MO: 1987), and Donald L. Kinzer, *An Episode in Anti-Catholicism: The American Protective Association* (Seattle: 1964).

¹⁸ *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1900* (Norman, OK: 1976), pp. 56, 318.

¹⁹ *American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy*, p. 214.

²⁰ "Welcome to the Federal Council: Its Character, Purpose, and Spirit Outlined," in Elias B. Sanford, ed., *Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America: Report of the First Meeting* (New York: 1909), p. 323.

V

In a tangled series of events, however, the bubble of Protestant confidence was pricked in the 1920s, and the ability of its leaders to speak as though they had a working religious majority decreased as the century wore on. The pervasive transformations wrought in society by what had happened during World War I became increasingly clear and made many of the patterns of the years just preceding its impact seem remote. As Barbara Tuchman has so powerfully put it, "The Great War of 1914-18 lies like a band of scorched earth dividing that time from ours."²¹ On the domestic scene the war played some role in deepening rifts between theological parties in the Protestant world when the bitter fundamentalist/modernist controversy was at its peak in 1925. The growing secularization in the culture was especially perplexing for churches that had been so confident of their cultural role. One might try to dismiss journalist H. L. Mencken's comment that "Protestantism in this great Christian realm is down with a wasting disease"²² as the gibe of an unfriendly critic, but the observation of Episcopal bishop Charles Fiske was as blunt when he described "a sad disintegration of American Protestantism."²³ What happened in the early depression years was aptly summarized by historian Theodore H. White: "This American Protestant culture dominated politics until 1932—when all of it broke down in the marketplace. . . ."²⁴ What I have elsewhere called "the second disestablishment" of American Protestantism—this time the disestablishment of the idea and practice of a voluntary Christendom—was clearly under way.²⁵ A man who for many decades was a wise and perceptive church leader, Samuel McCrea Cavert, exclaimed in 1937 that "we can no longer discuss the relation of Church and State, even in America, on the basis of the old assumptions which have held the field down to our own day."²⁶ Though many only later became aware of it, during the depression the "Protestant era" in American history came to a close. For some this seemed to mean the loss of religion itself, for others it meant the freeing of religion from old alliances that were outdated and had become dysfunctional. Perceptions of the realities of religious life only slowly dawned on many people as aware-

²¹ *The Proud Tower* (New York: 1966), p. xiii.

²² *American Mercury*, IV (1925), 286.

²³ *Confessions of a Troubled Parson* (New York: 1928), p. 191.

²⁴ *In Search of History* (New York: 1978), p. 626.

²⁵ *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities* (2nd ed.; New York: 1984), chap. 7.

²⁶ "Points of Tension between Church and State in America Today," in Henry P. Van Dusen et al., *Church and State in the Modern World* (New York: 1937), p. 191.

ness of the actual changes, especially the growing pluriformity of religious institutions, spread unevenly. Much depended on what part of the country one lived in, and how much one's own religious horizon revolved around a given tradition. In part because of the continuing assumption that this was a Christian nation—as late as 1931 the Supreme Court observed that “we are a Christian people”²⁷—the facts only slowly became widely recognized that the spectrum of denominations was steadily widening as various new groups such as (for example) the Jehovah's Witnesses enlarged their circle of followers, as Judaism had grown into a major religious movement with its own extensive network of divisions and institutions, as the Latter Day Saints became one of the larger churches, and as the number of groups related to other world religions was increasing.

VI

This article began with two questions: why did Herberg's book of 1955 come as such a surprise as it dramatized American religious pluralism, and why did the number of Supreme Court church-state cases mushroom so dramatically after 1940? To comment in chronological order, by the latter date various court cases were dramatizing a rapidly changing religious situation. At local levels, for example, clashes arose as familiar laws and customs that reflected the older Protestant era were challenged. An important constitutional development opened the way for the Court to deal with such matters. The Fourteenth Amendment of 1868 had included the clause that “No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States.” In a case in 1940, *Cantwell v. Connecticut*, the Court unanimously upheld the right of Jehovah's Witnesses to propagate their faith publicly and engage in door-to-door solicitation without a permit. In so doing, the Supreme Court specifically incorporated the free exercise clause of the First Amendment into the Fourteenth, thereby making it applicable to the states.²⁸ Then, seven years later in *Everson v. Board of Education*, a New Jersey school bus case, in a close decision (5-4) the Court found that parents of parochial as well as public school children should be reimbursed for fares spent in getting children to school, and in so doing also incorporated the establishment clause into the First Amendment.²⁹ Thus, a century and a half after the First Amendment had been

²⁷ *United States v. Macintosh*, 283 U.S. 625 (1931).

²⁸ 310 U.S. 296 (1940).

²⁹ 330 U.S. 1 (1947).

ratified, its clauses on religion were finally applied to the states. During the nineteenth century what I have called voluntary Christendom as promoted by general agreements among most of the leading Protestant denominations seemed to push opposing movements, including a growing and massive Catholicism, into "minority" status, until the growing strengths of many minorities, coupled with the slow recognition that the situation was indeed changing, led to the new situation that emerged in the 1940s.

Herberg's *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* did not discuss the court cases, but was an effort at analysis of the American religious situation in the 1950s in the midst of an upturn in religious vitality. Among other things, the analysis highlighted the significance of immigration and its contributions to the pluralization of religion in America. Two of the chapters had as primary titles "From the Land of Immigrants to the Triple Melting Pot," and five others profiled, compared, and contrasted the three main "communities" of the book's title. It proved to be a dramatic though oversimplified way of emphasizing what had happened to American religious life, and led to a new awareness among many persons of the twentieth-century significance of the religious pluriformity that had long been a reality.

To conclude: the term "church and state" was never really accurate for the American scene, at least not since the colonial legal establishments of Congregationalism in three New England states and Anglicanism in five southern states (and partly in New York) had disappeared. But the fact that in its place we have a growing network of religious movements and associations on the one hand and an expanding system of governmental agencies at local, state, and national levels on the other was to a large measure obscured through the nineteenth century by the Protestant effort to make America a Christian nation as it defined it—a Christendom to be won by voluntary means. As the result of such forces as vast immigration, the freeing of black people to go their own way religiously, and the founding of many new movements, the older pattern was finally largely pushed aside and new ways of dealing with tensions between denominations and their relationships with governmental agencies had to be found. One important way of doing this was to appeal to the religion clauses of the First Amendment, and so we moved into the period in which we now are, one marked by considerable controversy and litigation. I began with two questions and have tried to answer them, but find myself struggling with another one with which I close: can we find a way to balance the approach to the so-called church-state problem through constitutional and legal issues with a more

general awareness for the concerns and commitments of others about matters of religion, and allow ourselves to see more fully that we are not dealing with abstractions labelled church and state but with a vast double network of religious associations of many kinds and of governmental agencies of many types?

Reflections on Recent South African Theological Writings

by PETER J. PARIS

A native of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, Dr. Peter J. Paris holds degrees from Acadia University in Nova Scotia and the University of Chicago. He was ordained by the African United Baptist Association of the Atlantic United Baptist Convention in Canada. Paris served as general secretary of the Student Christian Movement of Canada at the University of Alberta from 1958-61 and as national traveling secretary for the Student Christian Movement of Nigeria from 1961-64. Formerly professor of ethics and society at Vanderbilt Divinity School, he joined the faculty of Princeton Seminary in July 1985. He is the author of Black Leaders in Conflict, and the forthcoming volume The Social Teaching of the Black Churches.

THE QUALITY of theological literature emanating from South Africa in recent years constitutes a major source of inspiration and enlightenment for present-day preachers, theologians, ethicists, and all others concerned about the relation of the Christian gospel to contemporary struggles for social justice. Written by prime actors in a seething cauldron of racial oppression, these sermons, poems, essays, press reports, open letters, funeral orations, and scholarly treatises represent the voices of faithful Christian leaders proclaiming a liberating gospel of hope and justice to a situation characterized by unbelievable pain and suffering.

Clearly, South Africa represents one of the most vivid contemporary occasions wherein Christianity's prophetic message of divine justice confronts intransigent forces of societal privilege bent on securing their way of life at the expense of a larger common humanity. Like most civil struggles, both sides of the South African conflict claim moral and religious authority for their respective positions. Only the opponents of apartheid, however, are dedicated to majority rule, i.e., one person one vote. Further, their thought and action reflect compassion for their oppressors since they view justice and reconciliation as intrinsically related.

Prior to the 1970s, the moral conscience of the world with respect to apartheid was shaped by the writings of both white and black prophets in South Africa. Alan Paton and Bishops Trevor Huddleston and Ambrose Reeves were the most notable white voices during the 1950s. Z. K. Mathews, Robert Subukwe, Gabriel Setiloane, and Albert Luthuli (all close friends

and colleagues of Nelson and Winnie Mandela) attained worldwide recognition during the 1960s as the most prominent leaders in the black South African churches courageously directing black opposition to the government's racial policies. Their mantle has been passed on to Bishop Desmond Tutu and the Reverend Alan Boesak who carry it with equal courage and faithfulness. Interestingly, both Chief Luthuli and Bishop Tutu (representing respectively the earlier and contemporary periods) have attained worldwide distinction as recipients of the coveted Nobel Peace Prize for their significant contributions to the struggle for justice. That prize clearly aided the moral confidence of all those dedicated to the activity of resisting apartheid.

In South Africa "black consciousness" is virtually synonymous with opposition to apartheid. This movement reached full realization in the 1960 Sharpeville protest against the discriminatory Pass Laws. The slaughter of sixty-nine blacks by the South African police shocked the world. Albert Luthuli, Robert Sobukwe, and Nelson Mandela were all imprisoned—the last still serving a life sentence. All subsequent opposition to apartheid views itself as a continuation of the Sharpeville event.

The church's participation in this "black consciousness" movement received a special boost in the early 1970s when black theologians in South Africa discovered that the conception of black theology in the United States could be adapted constructively for interpreting their own struggle. Accordingly, Alan Boesak, a minister in the Dutch Reformed Mission Church of South Africa and president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, wrote a doctoral dissertation in 1976 for the Theological Academy of Kampen in the Netherlands after doing research at Union Theological Seminary in New York and Colgate-Rochester Seminary on the philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X. During that period he had the opportunity to consult extensively with such progenitors of black theology as James Cone and Gayraud Wilmore. His book *Farewell to Innocence: A Socio-Ethical Study on Black Theology and Power* (Orbis, 1977) claims a close alliance among all liberation theologies but especially between black theology in the United States and South African theology. Further, he argues that human liberation from oppression is political activity justified by God and the awareness of this fact marks the end of innocence. No longer will black South African Christians need to accept their plight and believe the myths aimed at keeping them in subjugation. In brief, Boesak's theology synthesizes the non-violent philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the self-determining initiative of black theology.

In his book *Crying in the Wilderness* (William B. Eerdmans, 1982), Bishop Tutu contributes an essay on "The Theology of Liberation" in which he writes:

In the recent past, it used to be taken for granted that when you talked about Christian theology, then you were really referring to theology as it had been done or was being done in the great centers of Christianity in Western Christendom. You would be thought to be discussing theology as it was being written, taught, or discussed in the UK, North America, or on the European continent, especially in Germany. If you came from a Third World country, you would be expected to study the theologians produced in these great centers, if you yourself aspired to be a theologian who wanted to be taken account of in the future.

But we note that some of the best theologies have come not from the undisturbed peace of a don's study, or his speculations in a university seminar, but from a situation where they have been hammered out on the anvil of adversity, in the heat of battle, or soon thereafter. For too long Western theology has wanted to lay claim to a universality that it cannot too easily call its own. . . . Consequently, we have in our midst now the theology of liberation, as developed in Latin America, and black theology, developed in the USA and Southern Africa (pp. 34-35).

Crying in the Wilderness contains a splendid collection of sermons, speeches, press statements, eulogies, and a host of other public addresses by Bishop Tutu while he served as general secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC). In reading the book, one is constantly amazed by the Christian insights and practical wisdom he exhibited in the many and varied occasions on which he was called to give leadership.

Similarly, Bishop Tutu's book *Hope and Suffering* (Eerdmans, 1983), is a collection of sermons and speeches that clearly demonstrate his power to proclaim the Christian gospel meaningfully to an oppressed people. But not that alone. Rather, Bishop Tutu's message of liberation is for both the oppressed and the oppressor. His ideal societal vision is an interracial nation of peace and harmony. His abhorrence of all forms of racism is a mark of his faithfulness to the anti-apartheid tradition in which he stands.

In 1984 Alan Boesak published a short book of seven sermons along with his famous "Letter to the South African Minister of Justice" under the title *Walking on Thorns: The Call to Christian Obedience* (William B. Eerdmans).

These sermons constitute one of the most persuasive confessions of faith that I have witnessed. In the foreword he writes,

I have discovered that obedience to God in the situation in which so many South Africans live is not the result of a decision one makes once for all. It is a commitment that needs to be renewed every day. I have also discovered something else: the love God has for us and which enables us to love God, liberates us for obedience, for the joy of freedom, the freedom to be freed from that fear of the cruel and violent people who know only the language of enslavement, intimidation and violence. . . . It is a joy that affirms life, to such an extent that those who really knew what they were talking about caught its spirit in a spiritual:

before I'll be a slave
I'll be buried in my grave
And go home to my Lord and be free.

But then they were slaves and understood why the struggle could also be a song, and why the crack of the whip and the sound of the gun could never drown out the promise of God (p. x).

In 1986, along with Charles Villa-Vicencio, Boesak published a book entitled *When Prayer Makes News* (Westminster). This book contains the memorable invitation to prayer under the title "A Theological Rationale and a Call to Prayer for the End to Unjust Rule." The occasion was the tenth anniversary of the Soweto massacre, June 16, 1986, commemorating the deaths of approximately 700 people. In the words of the call,

Now, on 16 June, and twenty-five years after the dawning of this phase of resistance, it is right to remember those whose blood has been shed in resistance and protest against an unjust system. It is also right that we as Christians reassess our response to a system that all right-thinking people identify as unjust. We have prayed for our rulers, as is demanded of us in the scriptures. We have entered into consultation with them, as is required by our faith. We have taken the reluctant and drastic step of declaring apartheid to be contrary to the declared will of God, and some churches have declared its theological justification to be a heresy. We now pray that God will replace the present structures of oppression with ones that are just, and remove from power those who persist in defying his laws, installing in their place leaders who will govern with justice and mercy (p. 26).

The "Call to Prayer" and the repressive response it elicited evidence the dangers that attend such a traditional liturgical activity that is often viewed by the state as harmless. Being non-violent, the churches decided to use a Christian weapon against the state, namely, prayer, and to put it in the service of the struggle for justice. The state declared the activity treasonable and used its coercive powers against those who participated in such activity.

The book contains a sermon by Alan Boesak, preached for the June 16th occasion, and a number of essays on prayer by several Christian leaders in South Africa (black and white). The final essay is Boesak's constructive commentary on Romans 13, a passage of Scripture frequently used by pro-apartheid forces in the service of pressing Christians into obedience to the state's laws.

Boesak's most recent book is dedicated to Paul L. Lehmann on the eightieth anniversary of his birth, September 10, 1986. Entitled *Comfort and Protest: The Apocalypse from a South African Perspective* (Westminster), it is a series of seven sermons on the apocalypse of St. John. These sermons were conceived in 1980 as a series of Bible studies for his local church. The message contained therein was confirmed for him in what he called an "Angelic Vision" received while in solitary confinement in a Pretoria prison in 1985. Boesak's circumstances enabled him to identify with the lone prophet on the Isle of Patmos seeking to address a persecuted people via an underground medium. These sermons are required reading for any one desirous of preaching from one of the least used books of the Bible, the book of Revelation. How many of us would have thought that the book of Revelation would serve the liberation struggle in South Africa so well?

Alan Boesak was a principal actor in the move to declare apartheid a heresy and the *Kairos Document* is one of several major South African church documents destined to rank among the classic texts on church-state relations. Many such documents appear in Charles Villa-Vicencio's *Between Christ and Caesar: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Church and State* (Eerdmans, 1986).

A concise but interesting overview of the history of the churches in South Africa is found in Majorie Hope and James Young's book, *The South African Churches in a Revolutionary Situation* (Orbis, 1983). The book contains personal interviews with a number of prominent prophetic voices (white and black) in the South African churches. It is a splendid introduction to people, churches, and events in contemporary South Africa.

The Church Struggle in South Africa (Eerdmans, 1986, revised), by John W. de Gruchy, is an excellent historical study of the churches in South Af-

rica and their respective struggles with apartheid. De Gruchy has also co-edited with Charles Villa-Vicencio a helpful book of essays entitled *Apartheid Is a Heresy* (Eerdmans, 1983) and both men also edited *Resistance and Hope: South African Essays in Honor of Beyer's Naude*, containing essays by prominent white and black church leaders opposing apartheid and honoring a great prophetic Afrikaner voice.

All of the above literature tell the stories of their authors and their respective struggles with faith, resistance, and hope. Each page is written in the midst of the bitter battle for the sake of delivering the message to a people who are suffering and dying for righteousness' sake, i.e., the sake of social justice. One cannot but be impressed with the confident hope of so many that justice will one day be victorious in South Africa and that that victory will be the fulfillment of a moral and Christian vision that is already present in the struggle itself. The spiritual significance of that struggle is South Africa's lasting legacy to world Christianity.

Patton of Princeton: A Profile

by HUGH T. KERR

Hugh T. Kerr is senior editor of Theology Today and professor of theology emeritus, Princeton Theological Seminary. A graduate of Princeton University, he is secretary of his class and writes regularly for The Princeton Alumni Weekly. He is a member of the Seminary's 175th Anniversary Committee, and this article is part of this year's Anniversary celebrations.

Princetoniana

FRANCIS LANDEY PATTON (1843-1932) was something of an enigma in his own day which, perhaps, explains why he has been mostly neglected in our day. The twelfth president of Princeton University, between the more celebrated careers of James McCosh and Woodrow Wilson and overshadowed by them in many ways, he also served as the first president of Princeton Theological Seminary. The only one to hold both offices, he also taught ethics and philosophy at both institutions, moving back and forth across the street from one campus to the other for more than thirty years.

During his dual presidency, both University and Seminary prospered with the addition of new faculty members, the expansion of the curriculum into new areas, and the building of dormitories and other campus facilities. Whether he was directly responsible for such development seems more doubtful, but at the time of his retirement from both institutions and in memorial tributes at the time of his death, Patton was widely eulogized.

Yet the puzzling side of Patton seemed at cross purposes with the affable autocrat who could charm large audiences, as well as more modest classrooms, with his wit, eloquence, and classic citations. On all the major religious and educational issues of the day, he misread the signs of the times. Whether defending the faith, as he interpreted it, or allowing inertia to stifle leadership, he was outdistanced by movements that could not wait for defensive argumentation or administrative inaction.

With all his faults, Patton nevertheless remains an intriguing person in both physical presence and intellectual alertness. When his heresy hunt against David Swing in Chicago was aborted, soon afterwards he was elected moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. When some, including Woodrow Wilson, connived to oust him as president of Princeton University, he bargained to retain his professorship, won the promotion of his son to full tenure on the faculty, secured a handsome ad-

vance salary payment, accepted the presidency of Princeton Theological Seminary, and continued to teach at both institutions with general acceptance.

If Patton had personal difficulties with some faculty and trustees at the University because he seemed willing to let things drift, his successor, Woodrow Wilson, an activist who always wanted to "do" something, also ran into his own disputes with faculty and trustees. Patton served as president of the University for fourteen years (he had hoped to round out twenty years like his predecessor McCosh). Wilson, with expectations of a long tenure, resigned after only eight years, disappointed with faculty and trustees who defeated his proposals for a law school, the quad plan, and the graduate school. Patton moved too slowly; Wilson too fast. Both Patton, the arch conservative, and Wilson, the liberal idealist, seemed out of touch with the popular movements of their times. It makes a fascinating study in diverse psychodynamics with suggestive implications for today.

There is scant material on Patton's private and family life with only a few anecdotes to enliven an otherwise dry recitation of dates and places. We are told on numerous occasions that he had a sparkling wit and could mesmerize audiences not only with the subtlety of his thought but by apt literary allusions. But Patton was not a heroic person whose exploits and adventures make for an absorbing biography. He was a quiet, reflective sort, and his profile must be revealed to us through the positions he occupied and the books, essays, and addresses bequeathed to us. Until someone can be persuaded to do a respectable research project, gathering the data deposited in all the archives, we must be content with a recital of Patton's vital statistics, some commentary on his long career, and an attempt, however tenuous, at evaluation.¹

I

Francis Landey Patton was born in Warwick, Bermuda, January 22, 1843. He was a lifelong member of Christ Church, Warwick, founded in 1719 and associated with the Church of Scotland. He attended the Warwick Academy where the Patton name is still remembered and honored. He migrated north to Knox College, the University of Toronto, and then took up

¹ Patton is accorded an entry in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, written by George M. Harper (Vol. XIV, pp. 315-16), and a more recent account by David W. Hirst in *A Princeton Companion*, ed. by Alexander Leitch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 354-57. He is listed in various editions of *Who's Who*, both British and American, and under the Class of 1865 in the *Biographical Catalogue of Princeton Theological Seminary* (1933 and 1955).

residence at Princeton Theological Seminary, graduating with the Class of 1865 and being ordained the same year by the Presbytery of New York. He served as minister for several Presbyterian churches, the Eighty-fourth Street Church in New York (1865-67), the Nyack, New York, Presbyterian Church (1867-70), and South Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn (1871). During his Nyack pastorate, Patton married Rosa Antoinette Stevenson, daughter of the Reverend J. M. Stevenson of the American Tract Society. They had seven children, one of whom, George Stevenson Patton, served as the first and only personal secretary to his father when president of the University.²

Patton's teaching career began in 1872 when he was persuaded by Cyrus Hall McCormick to come to Chicago to what was then called the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the Northwest (later, in 1886, renamed McCormick Theological Seminary in honor of its generous benefactor). It was a time of church and theological disruption with animosities between New School and Old School Presbyterians still lingering, and with the newly added divisiveness of North and South following the Civil War. The more liberal theological trends of the times frightened many, such as McCormick, who persuaded Patton, a British subject unconnected with the local disputes, to occupy the chair of Didactic and Polemical Theology (an apt description of Patton's theology if ever there was one).

It was hoped that Patton would bolster the conservative tradition and provide an articulate voice for the classic doctrines of Calvinism. He did that and more. In 1874, he brought charges of heresy against the Reverend David Swing, a popular liberal preacher in Chicago. Patton drew up an extensive list of charges against Swing and used his own position as editor of the *Interior*, a religious newspaper financially sponsored by McCormick, to publicize the debate.

Although Patton lost his case against Swing at the Presbytery level, he gained wide attention everywhere as an able advocate for conservative theology. In 1878, he was elected moderator of the General Assembly, and in 1881 he was called to Princeton Theological Seminary to occupy a newly endowed chair with the impressive designation "The Relations of Philosophy and Science to the Christian Religion."

In addition to his Seminary teaching, Patton accepted in 1884 a teaching

² George Stevenson Patton (1869-1937) had a significant career of his own. A graduate of both the College (1891; M.A. 1894) and the Seminary (1895), he also studied at the University of Berlin and Cambridge University. He taught moral philosophy for several years at Princeton University but retired to Bermuda where he served as director of education (1914-24) and as a member of the Colonial Parliament (1916-37). A large stained-glass window in his memory, with a Princeton shield in one corner, adorns a wall of Christ Church, Warwick.

assignment across the street at the College, giving courses in ethics and philosophy of religion. He must have been more than an average teacher because in 1888 he was elected by the College trustees to succeed the enterprising James McCosh as president.³

The academic traffic continued back and forth. When Patton resigned as president of the University, June 9, 1902, he was persuaded to become president of Princeton Theological Seminary, a position he held until retirement in 1913 when he was seventy years of age.⁴ During his Seminary tenure, he continued to teach at the University, preach at the Marquand Chapel, and address various alumni groups.

The Seminary, founded in 1812, had no president until Patton's election in 1902. For ninety years, the senior professor presided over faculty meetings and other official events, such as Commencement. Patton's position did not entail significant administrative responsibilities, and he had little liking or talent for executive leadership anyway. The more casual atmosphere of the Seminary must have been congenial for him, and apparently he greatly enjoyed his years on the Seminary campus.⁵

In 1913, Patton retired to his beloved Bermuda, to "Carberry Hill," the home where he was born and in which he died, November 25, 1932. In 1924, he returned to Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, to deliver the Sprunt Lectures (published in 1926 as *Fundamental Christianity*). In the meantime, "Carberry Hill" was always open for visiting Princetonians from both University and Seminary. On his eighty-fifth birthday, January 22, 1928, the city of Hamilton in a public ceremony unveiled an official portrait of Patton, reported by *The Royal Gazette* under the headline "Bermuda's Grand Old Man."⁶

³ Although he was always a popular teacher, many have expressed dismay at his leadership style, or lack of it. As some quipped, "laissez-faire" meant "lazy fare."

⁴ Apparently, Patton was not immediately eager to accept the presidency of the Seminary. He wrote Benjamin B. Warfield, June 28, 1902, who was in summer residence in Lexington, Kentucky, that "it is impossible for me to contemplate the resumption of administrative duties. . . . I desire the leisure for thought and reading of which I have been deprived." *Letterpress*, Vol. 16 (Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University).

⁵ Patton's administrative duties at the Seminary were minimal. "For practical purposes, he was hardly more than senior professor with a new title," Lefferts A. Loetscher, *The Broadening Church* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1954), p. 138. The kind of mutual exchange between College and Seminary, illustrated in Patton's two-way traffic, was commonplace for many years. See Hugh T. Kerr, "The Seminary and the College: The First Twenty-Five Years," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, Vol. VI, New Series 1985, No. 2, pp. 116-22.

⁶ The newspaper notes that Patton, in thanking all those assembled, "congratulated the artist, too, on making what was called a striking success of what he, the speaker, had regarded as an unpromising subject." Speer Library, Princeton Theological Seminary, has in

II

As a diversionary interlude before turning to more serious matters, here are a few samples of Patton's celebrated wit and repartee.

When an anxious mother asked Patton if her freshman son would receive a good education at Princeton, he replied: "Yes, Madam, satisfaction guaranteed; or the product will be returned."

In an address at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York in 1908, Patton began by saying: "I shall endeavor to adhere strictly to what I regard as the true formula of speeches of this nature; that formula being three drops of pure thought diluted with two ounces of distilled rhetoric."

Patton could tell jokes on himself. "I used to hate to see anybody flunk and usually took the boy's side whenever I conscientiously could. I remember one occasion at a faculty meeting . . . when my old friend Dean [Andrew Fleming] West took me up on a remark I had made. 'The President has reminded us,' Dean West said, 'that we stand *in loco parentis*. As for myself, I don't object to standing in the place of a mother, but I do object to standing in the place of a grandmother.'" Patton chuckled and added: "Everybody knew what he meant by that!"

After he had retired, under considerable pressure, as president of the University, Patton was introduced one day to a stranger who asked: "Didn't you once have some relation to Princeton University?" Patton replied: "Yes, president, once removed."

Two stories about Patton used to circulate around the Seminary campus some years ago when he was still remembered by alumni. In the days when recitation of textbook assignments was the accepted method of instruction, Patton asked a student to explain Calvin's doctrine of double predestination. The seminarian stumbled around for a minute or two and then blurted out: "Professor, I did study the assignment, and I did know the answer, but now I can't remember." Looking out over the class, Patton said: "What a pity! The only one who ever knew the answer can't now recall it."

One day on the Seminary campus as he was talking with Benjamin B. Warfield, Patton, with failing eyesight, asked: "Is this woman approaching us someone I should know and speak to?" And Warfield replied: "Well, that's up to you; it's Mrs. Patton."

On one occasion when students began to shuffle their feet, anticipating the end of the class hour, Patton said, assuming a knowledge of the Bible

its archives a fifty-foot roll of 16mm film of Dr. and Mrs. Patton at their home in Bermuda about this time. They waved to the camera, but both were almost completely blind.

which today might be assuming too much: "Please restrain your impatience: I have still a few more pearls to cast."

When some trustees wondered if Patton had any business experience to qualify him for executive responsibility, he assured them that he thought a "college president ought to know an interest-coupon from a railway ticket, and that he ought to be able to understand a balance-sheet as well as grade an examination paper."

Sometimes, as often happens, an intended witticism backfires. Speaking before an alumni group and suggesting that the campus teaches as much as the faculty, Patton said: "I am not prepared to say that it is better to have gone and loafed than never to have gone at all, but I do believe in the *genius loci*, and I sympathize with Sir Joshua Reynolds when he says that there is around every seminary of learning an atmosphere of floating knowledge where everyone can imbibe something peculiar to his own original conceptions." As David W. Hirst, who quotes this remark, says: "Perceptive though this observation was, unfortunately the subordinate clause . . . was to be remembered and later often quoted out of context as evidence of Patton's casual attitude toward scholarship."⁷

III

It is often the case that the first essay or writing of a theologian or religious thinker sets the tone and direction for later developments. One thinks of Barth's early 1916 essay on the Bible and Bultmann's first extended discussion of demythologizing, both of which contained the seeds of their later, fuller theological positions. An early article by Reinhold Niebuhr on the ethics of Jesus and H. Richard Niebuhr's doctoral dissertation on Troeltsch could be taken as normative texts for their later work. Robert Bellah's first discussion of civil religion and Stephen Crites' initial suggestion about narrative set the course for much later discussion of both trends. Any of the early sermons of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Valerie Saiving Goldstein's perceptive first essay on a feminine view of theology both issued in later developments far beyond the immediate circumstances.⁸

⁷ Hirst, *A Princeton Companion*, p. 355. The most flagrant distortion of Patton's statement can be found in Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker's *Princeton: 1746-1896* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), p. 365. Wertenbaker quotes only the "loafing" section of Patton's remark and then lamely excuses the abridgment by adding: "Whether or not he [Patton] uttered the famous aphorism . . . it fairly represented his views."

⁸ Karl Barth, "The Strange New World within the Bible," in *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, ed. by Douglas Horton (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1928). Rudolf Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," in *Kerygma and Myth*, ed. by H. W. Bartsch (New York: Macmillan, 1953). Reinhold Niebuhr, "The Ethic of Jesus and the Social Problem," in *Reli-*

Francis Landey Patton's "first essay" consisted of a prosecutor's brief of charges against the Reverend David Swing for doctrinal heresy. In Patton's case, the essay was not so important as the event and its later implications for him as a theologian.

Patton could easily have subscribed to the sentiment expressed a year or two earlier by Charles Hodge on the occasion of the celebration of his semi-centennial at Princeton Seminary. In the course of his remarks, Hodge uttered the ambiguous and often ridiculed testimony: "I am not afraid to say that a new idea never originated in this Seminary." The phraseology was not felicitous, but Hodge's meaning was consistent with his view of the Reformed faith, namely, that the biblical revelation and the Calvinistic system as set forth in the Westminster Standards have a certain stability and structure not open to revision or private interpretation. If the Presbyterian church happens to have an official creed, then doctrinal integrity requires that its ministers and theological teachers should either affirm it or go elsewhere. This intransigent but logically consistent view, no doubt, lay behind Patton's comment at the Swing trial when it was said that the doctrine of eternal punishment was unpalatable for the modern mind. Patton replied: "I cannot help it if that is a doctrine which is unpleasant to the feelings. It is in the Confession of Faith."⁹

The details of the Swing trial disclose a regional, late nineteenth-century theological dispute that divided churches, denominations, seminaries, and theologians. It was essentially a debate, sometimes acrimonious and often divisive, between "liberals" and "conservatives," or, as they were called in the 1920s, "modernists" and "fundamentalists." Such terms are clearly too broad and ambiguous, and, as it has been said, it is usually true that "labels are libels." Besides the two main parties to the debate, there were two other less vociferous factions, those who urged restraint and moderation and those who wanted no part of it in any way. Depending on one's perspective, perhaps all four groups had reason to claim victory of a sort.

The bare facts of the Swing heresy trial are these: (1) the Reverend David Swing (1830-94), a graduate of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, was the

gion in Life (Vol. 1, No. 2, Spring 1932). H. Richard Niebuhr, "Ernst Troeltsch's Philosophy of Religion" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale Divinity School, 1924). Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," in *Daedalus* (Vol. 96, No. 1, Winter 1967). Stephen Crites, "The Narrative Quality of Experience," in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (Vol. 39, No. 3, Sept. 1971). Martin Luther King, Jr., for example, "The Birth of a New Nation" (Atlanta, April 1957, King Center transcript). Valerie Saiving Goldstein, "The Human Situation: A Feminine View," in *The Journal of Religion* (Vol. XL, No. 2, Apr. 1960). Most of these essays have been reprinted, some several times, in collections and anthologies.

⁹ For the Hodge statement, see Loetscher, *The Broadening Church*, p. 25. For Patton, see *The Trial of the Rev. David Swing* (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg and Co., 1874), p. 71.

bright and eloquent preacher at four Chicago churches: Westminster, North Presbyterian, Fourth Presbyterian, and Central. (2) Widely regarded as the most brilliant and popular preacher in Chicago, his sermons were published in newspapers and in books, and audiences in his last church numbered 2,000 to 3,000 every week, with a Sunday School attendance of 4,000 or more. (2) Swing regarded creeds as historically dated; he did not preach doctrinal sermons but an egalitarian gospel of God's love and the ameliorating influence of Christianity on culture and society. (4) Conservative clergy, particularly of the Presbyterian Old School variety, viewed this "new theology" as dangerous and diluted. (5) With the considerable financial support of Cyrus Hall McCormick, the inventor and industrialist, Francis Landey Patton, at twenty-nine years of age, was called to the Chicago seminary and as editor of the *Interior*. (6) After editorials directed at Swing's liberal preaching, Patton in April 1874 brought two formal charges of heresy against Swing to the Presbytery of Chicago, detailing the charges in twenty-eight "specifications." (7) A month's extended debate on both sides followed, with the Presbytery eventually acquitting the defendant of both charges by a vote of three to one. (8) When Patton threatened to appeal through the Synod, Swing resigned from the Presbytery and became the minister of a newly formed independent Central Church (from 1875 until his death in 1894). (9) Though defeated in his first major theological confrontation, Patton went on, as has already been noted, to be elected moderator of the General Assembly in 1878, and three years later he was called to Princeton Theological Seminary.¹⁰

IV

The two sides to the debate between Patton and Swing seem today in many ways only musty reminders of an out-of-date verbal sparring match. Swing's gospel was an Enlightenment amalgam of what Harnack epitomized a few years later as "the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man," including the masculinist language. Swing preached the betterment of humanity through enlightened tolerance, altruism, and concern for the general welfare. The Christian faith, with special emphasis on the Sermon on the Mount and the moral example of the Christ figure, was expected to

¹⁰ The records and commentary on the Swing trial are extensive, including articles and editorials in the *Interior* (1873-75); *The Trial of the Rev. David Swing*; William T. Hutchison's two-volume biography, *Cyrus Hall McCormick* (New York: Appleton-Century Co., 1935), Vol. I, pp. 250-57; Loetscher, *The Broadening Church*, pp. 13-15; William R. Hutchison, "Disapproval of Chicago: The Symbolic Trial of David Swing," in the *Journal of American History* (Vol. LIX, 1972), pp. 30-47 and *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 58-75.

make its own appeal to intelligent people without recourse to creeds or gloomy doctrines such as original sin and eternal damnation.

During his own defense, Swing juxtaposed "cold orthodoxy" with "living faith" and "slavish adherence" to creeds with "free inquiry." He noted that more liberal theological views sprang directly from a defunct Puritanism, and he chided the conservative clergy for not themselves preaching all the "dark theology" of their own tradition. "Nothing could induce you to preach it," he said. "Confess with me that our beloved church has slipped away from all the religion of despair and has come unto Mount Sion into the atmosphere of Jesus as he was in life and death, full of love and forgiveness."¹¹

For his part, Patton's single-minded purpose was to insist on faithful acceptance of the Presbyterian creedal standards. His first formal charge against Swing noted that he "had not been zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the gospel," and the second charge simply declared that Swing "does not sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith of this church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures."

Patton's twenty-eight "specifications" tried to cite examples of Swing's doctrinal aberrations. But much of Patton's critique related to Swing's "equivocal language," "vague and ambiguous language," "language . . . derogatory to the standards of the Presbyterian church," "contempt for the doctrines of our church," "loose and unguarded language." Since even Patton must have realized that it was impossible to convict Swing because of the ambiguity of his language, the main emphasis of the charges against Swing asserted that he did not preach the whole truth of Scripture or the creeds. "He omits to preach or teach," Patton stated, "one or more of the doctrines indicated in the following statements of Scripture, namely: that Christ is a 'propitiation for our sins,' that we have 'redemption through his blood,' that we are 'justified by faith,' that 'there is no other name . . . whereby we may be saved,' . . . that 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,' and that 'the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment.'"¹²

¹¹ *The Trial of the Rev. David Swing*, p. 19. Swing's published sermons appear in *Truths for Today* (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg and Co., 1874) and *David Swing: A Memorial Volume*, compiled by his daughter, Helen Swing Starring (Chicago: F. Tennyson Neely, 1894). In more recent times, Emil Brunner liked to point out that in the 1536 edition of Calvin's *Institutes*, no mention is made of the doctrine of double predestination, and that "in the hundreds of sermons Calvin preached, he rarely mentions the doctrine" (*The Christian Doctrine of God, Dogmatics*, Vol. I [Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950]), p. 324.

¹² *The Trial of the Rev. David Swing*, pp. 8-14. The whole procedure, in Hutchison's view, was "ill-advised" and "quixotic" based on "imputed guilt-by-association" (*The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism*, pp. 60ff.).

V

The significance of the Swing heresy trial for evaluating Patton's later career is threefold. First, the stolid, unyielding theological position which he enunciated at the trial continued throughout his life without change or revision of any kind. Second, the world of the church as well as educational developments at both the University and the Seminary quietly but decisively moved beyond the world Patton had created for himself. Third, although Patton's theology remained unchanged, he himself, little by little, became more affable and outgoing. The rigid person behind the theology eventually mellowed in very human and humane ways, and this new Patton is best reflected in his public addresses and occasional pieces.

To be honest, it must be said that Patton's theological books and doctrinal essays make mostly dull reading today. His exposition of basic Christian beliefs rarely lifts the human spirit or warms the heart. It wasn't a lack of literary style but of originality and imagination. His books are, biblically and doctrinally speaking, uniformly plodding and ponderous. He did not have Charles Hodge's structural, analytic mind, and he was not blessed with B. B. Warfield's meticulous research ability.

Perhaps it is always true that if one is unwilling to entertain any new idea, the repetition of well-worn and widely accepted truths must prove tedious and prosaic. It isn't that Patton's theology was wrong or seriously skewed; it just seems uninteresting today. This is in marked contrast with many of his public addresses where his wit and literary allusions give life and lift to his prose.

Patton's theological corpus is not extensive. It consists of three published books and several printed doctrinal essays.¹³ His theology could be termed a strict constructionist interpretation of the Westminster Standards, with two or three idiosyncratic trademarks.¹⁴ His references and author attribu-

¹³ *The Inspiration of the Scriptures* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1869); *A Summary of Christian Doctrine* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1898); *Fundamental Christianity* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1926); "Presbyterian Doctrine" (1898) in *Bi-Centennial, First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Henry B. Ashmead, 1900); "The Revision of the Confession of Faith" (Reprinted from *The Independent*, 1889); "The Letter and the Spirit" in *Princeton Sermons* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1893); "The Fundamental Doctrines of the Presbyterian Church," in *Addresses at the Third Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1895); "Theological Encyclopaedia," in *The Princeton Theological Review* (Vol. II, Jan. 1904); "A Century of Presbyterian Doctrine," in *The Centennial, New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C.*, 1909.

¹⁴ Patton tended to ignore the role of the Holy Spirit, as did Hodge and Warfield, as related to the inspiration of the Scriptures, contrary to Calvin and the clear statement in the

tions are mostly of the name-dropping variety, indicating that he has heard of or read his contemporaries, but that he is uninterested in detailed comparative research.¹⁵ He seems unaware of or unimpressed by other Reformed traditions, such as the Mercersburg theology of John Williamson Nevins (1803-86) and Philip Schaff (1819-93), contemporaries whom he never mentions.¹⁶

For a brief period, 1883-1888, Patton and Charles A. Briggs of Union Theological Seminary in New York served together as co-editors of the *Presbyterian Review*, published at Princeton.¹⁷ Patton's only major contribution was an extended article on "The Dogmatic Aspect of Pentateuchal Criticism" in which he decried the baleful influence of Wellhausen and, once again, warned against the peril of subjectivism if the Holy Spirit were posited as the guarantor of infallibility. Briggs, who contributed two articles in the series including Patton's essay, was at the time in the early stages of his critical historical development, but he and Patton had almost nothing in common except that they were both Presbyterians. Patton was later appointed chairman of a General Assembly investigating committee during the Briggs heresy trial in 1891, but, as in the Swing case, the defendant withdrew from the Presbyterian church, Swing becoming a Congregationalist and Briggs an Episcopalian.¹⁸

VI

It has often been observed that liberating movements in virtually every area almost always define themselves as over against existing more conser-

Westminster Standards. He was opposed to any revision of the Confession and yet he could endorse the so-called five points of Calvinism defined at the Synod of Dort in 1619.

¹⁵ For example, in *Fundamental Christianity*, Patton frequently dismisses well-known theologians or thinkers with a damaging phrase, such as, "William James as a radical empiricist was a pluralist and believed in a finite God" (p. 55); "what is Bergson's philosophy but a compromise between Hegel and Spencer?" (p. 115); "Gore has proved himself to be a clever helmsman" (p. 125); "the moral influence theory of the atonement [Bushnell, Moberly] stands condemned" (p. 301); "the New Testament is not what Schleiermacher said it was" (p. 153).

¹⁶ For the Mercersburg theology and its departure from the Princeton tradition, see James H. Nichols, *Romanticism in American Theology: Nevins and Schaff at Mercersburg* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961) and "Evangelical Catholicism," in *Sons of the Prophets*, ed. by Hugh T. Kerr (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 69-81.

¹⁷ Theological journalism at Princeton Theological Seminary began in 1825 with the *Biblical Repertory* followed by a succession of quarterlies with various names, *Princeton Review*, *The Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review*, *The Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review*, *The Presbyterian Review*, *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, and the *Princeton Theological Review*, the last issue of which was in 1929, followed by a hiatus of fifteen years until the first issue of *Theology Today*, April 1944.

¹⁸ A full discussion of these articles can be found in Mark A. Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986).

vative and traditional views. David Swing was right when he observed that the "new theology" of the Unitarians and Transcendentalists emerged in New England as a protest movement against a sterile Puritanism. In more recent times, Karl Barth elevated this kind of opposition to a first principle of Reformation theology. General or natural revelation, he insisted, only exists in protest against and because of the prior and independent existence of a theology based on special revelation.

When Barth was approached in 1935 to deliver the Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen University, he was forced to justify his acceptance of the invitation. Lord Gifford had stipulated in his will that the lectureship should magnify and extend "natural theology," as in any scientific discipline such as chemistry or astronomy, "without reference to or reliance upon any supposed special, exceptional, or so-called miraculous revelation."

But Reformation theology, to which Barth was committed, asserted that "the revival of the Gospel by Luther and Calvin consisted in their desire to see both the church and human salvation founded on the Word of God *alone*, on God's *revelation in Jesus Christ*, as it is attested in the Scripture, and on faith in that Word." And since natural theology only exists in opposition to this Reformation theology, Barth felt justified in accepting the lectureship invitation in order to clarify the special revelation without which natural theology could not exist.¹⁹

This excursus into what could be called confrontative theology suggests that the most plausible defense of Patton's stolid Calvinism might be a "pre-Barthian" intention to clarify and make explicit a classic Reformation theology against which other theologies could be sharpened and honed. But while Barth, tongue-in-cheek, could joke that his presentation of Reformation theology might give his opponents even further reason to devote themselves to natural theology, Patton, though he could be witty about many things, was deadly serious about the absolute trustworthiness of the unaltered Westminster Standards. He was always aggressively defensive about his type of Calvinism and not at all interested in theological dialogue.

In the meantime, whether Patton noticed it or not, the mind and mood of the Presbyterian church were passing him by. David Swing was acquitted of heresy in his own Presbytery; the Briggs heresy trial in 1891 resulted in the withdrawal of both the defendant and Union Theological Seminary from the Presbyterian church; the Westminster Standards, in spite of Pat-

¹⁹ Karl Barth, *The Knowledge of God and the Service of God* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938), pp. 3-12. A corollary of Barth's principle implied that while natural theology depends on revealed theology, the reverse does not hold true. Revealed theology exists independently, regardless of opposition movements.

ton's adamant opposition, were revised in 1903; the Presbyterian church and the Cumberland Presbyterian church were merged in 1906 over Patton's protest; and when the Machen controversy threatened to disrupt both Princeton Seminary and the Presbyterian church, Patton wrote a letter in 1926 from retirement in Bermuda, extolling the qualifications of Machen for the chair of apologetics.

In all these theological disputes, Patton misjudged the direction his own tradition was taking. He doubtless would have maintained that his position was the right one, and while many in the church agreed with him then, as many would today, the theological drift of the times was otherwise. The mind of the church was "broadening."²⁰

One can only conjecture what would have happened to Princeton Seminary if Patton had still been at the Seminary during the Machen controversy in 1929. His theological inclination would have sided with the dissidents who split to form Westminster Theological Seminary and the Orthodox Presbyterian church. Happily, we may say providentially, Patton's successor, J. Ross Stevenson, as Seminary president, with a few others such as Charles R. Erdman and Frederick W. Loetscher, provided the balance-wheel of moderation and restraint. Ten years later, after the storm, Stevenson's successor, John A. Mackay, a conservative but lyrical Scot, demonstrated decisively that the Reformed tradition itself contained the seeds of renewal to enable the broadening church to be faithful to its heritage and alert to the destiny of the times. Twenty-five years later, the same renewal of tradition emerged with Pope John XXIII and Vatican Council II. Patton never gave any indication that his own theological tradition might grow, evolve, or develop within itself. He seemed satisfied with it as it was and resisted any notion of change even from within.

VII

After such a doleful rehearsal of Patton's theological jousts, can anything good be said for him? If we were to begin by reading his obituaries and numerous memorial minutes, it might seem we are not talking about the same person. What happened? Did he himself change, and was there another, more affable, side to the recalcitrant "apologetic and polemic" theologian that endeared him to so many? To answer these questions, we must look at what ecumenical gatherings used to call "non-theological factors."

For one thing, over the years Patton gradually changed his physical ap-

²⁰ This is the theme and thesis underlying Lefferts A. Loetscher's detailed analysis in *The Broadening Church*.

pearance. A succession of available photographs begins with a prim, slender, side-whiskered, frock-coated preacher-professor stereotype. But as the years go on, Patton takes on the kindly, benevolent face and figure of a humane-looking octogenarian.²¹ There is no wit or lightness of touch in Patton's theology, but his public addresses of various kinds reflect his later more benign appearance. Curiously, the two sides of his personality, the rigid doctrinaire and defender and the popular orator, existed side by side simultaneously.

This is not so curious after all. There are numerous historical and contemporary examples of ultra-conservatives with outgoing, congenial personalities. It was said of J. Gresham Machen that while he could be sober as a judge in his orthodoxy, he was always the life of the party in Alexander Hall dormitory where he lived or on board ship during his many summer transatlantic trips. Clarence E. Macartney, the doughty Pittsburgh Presbyterian, who was never quite sure whether to split with the Westminster crowd or stay with his *Alma Mater* in its time of troubles (he stayed), could entertain large alumni groups (no alumnae in his day) with quips about smokers and their "incense rising from heathen fires" and other such arcane allusions. In our own day, one needs only to think of Ronald Reagan, William F. Buckley, Jr., or Pope John Paul II for the same combination of doctrinal conservatism and personal charm.

We see the "other Patton" in his public speeches and in tributes to colleagues. The "non-theological factor" here is just that; these pieces are non-theological. To put it more positively, they speak to a common human experience with Patton, as it were, inviting his audience to participate with him, instead of standing over against them in defensive argumentation.

The literary style of these non-theological items not only differs markedly from the doctrinal treatises, but it reveals a more leisurely and relaxed mood. The language is often flowery, the sentences unending, the allusions strained, but this was what audiences at the time expected and responded to with general approval and applause. We may look briefly at a few typical examples.

VIII

Patton's inaugural address as president of the College of New Jersey, June 20, 1888, is a fine example of his general knowledge of higher education, his

²¹ Woodrow Wilson's first impression of Patton was not flattering. "As soon as I saw him, I was disappointed: a tall, lean, spare-visaged man, with narrow knit brows and a mouth set to the taste of vinegar." *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson: 1884-1885*, p. 114.

awareness of other colleges and universities, and his avowed intentions to magnify future developments in scholarship and campus facilities. His critics would later counter that his expectations mostly went unfulfilled, but at the time he anticipated the shift from college to university status (which did not come until 1896); he favored more electives in the four-year course; and he worked out in his own mind a balance between liberal arts and scientific studies.

It is a very long address, coming to more than forty printed pages. After an introduction by Henry van Dyke on behalf of the alumni, Patton paid handsome tribute to his predecessor, James McCosh, who was seated on the platform. "I know," said Patton, "my own limitations, and I could not but know that they would be accentuated by being placed in direct antithesis to the shining qualities of my predecessor." Later, in a tribute to Joseph Henry (1797-1878), the versatile Princeton inventor whose experiments with electromagnetism made Morse's telegraph possible, Patton said: "There is no necessary antagonism between a man's work as a teacher and his work as an investigator. It is the man who is making contributions to his department whom the students wish to hear. None know that better than Princeton men who remember Professor Henry as the prince of teachers, and who at the same time knew that he was the father of telegraphy, and that it is his genius that has enabled us to whisper round the world."

As to the relation between science and religion, Patton spoke in words typical of his style. "We do not," he said, "mean to extinguish the torch of science that we may sit in religious moonlight, and we do not intend to send our religion up to the biological laboratory for examination and approval. We shall not be afraid to open our eyes in the presence of nature, nor ashamed to close them in the presence of God."²²

At a meeting of the University faculty, February 2, 1898, the following action was taken by unanimous vote: "*Resolved*, that the thanks of the Faculty of Princeton University be tendered President Patton for his wise and timely address on Temperance given Sunday, January 30th, in Marquand Chapel, and that in the judgment of the Faculty it should be printed and widely circulated." Student discipline was a constant headache for American college and university administrators at this time, with students rioting in the streets, suspected of arson in the halls and dormitories, and drinking and carousing at the local taverns.

Patton's mild and somewhat patronizing admonishment to the Princeton

²² *The Inauguration of President Patton*, Princeton, New Jersey, June 20, 1888. Pamphlet in Speer Library. The references are to pp. 16, 20, 22.

students took the title "The Duty of Self-Control." It began with a gesture of conciliation: "I bear grateful testimony to the high moral tone of the students of this University. I know that they have been misrepresented and misunderstood. Their hilarity, their boisterous outbursts of exuberant energy, their song-singing which often has a more Bacchanalian sound than I could wish, and in some instances their inexcusable acts of wrongdoing have produced impressions which the facts will not justify." He then went on to instruct the students in matters of conscience, public and private, and the influence of Christian faith on moral behavior. In some ways, it is a condescending address, but in other ways it shows Patton's ready identification with the students and his willingness to discuss with them a highly inflammatory campus issue.²³

There are many more such addresses that suggest a quite different person from Patton the dogmatist. For example, in his extended speech at the celebration of the sesquicentennial of the College in 1896, at which time Patton announced that henceforth the College of New Jersey would be known as Princeton University, he spoke at great length about "Religion in the University." But it was not a doctrinaire plea for religion. On the contrary, he observed that "there are universities (and Princeton is one of them) that may be regarded as distinctly Christian institutions. Still they are Christian rather in the conditions of their origin than in the contents of their curricula. Their object is not so much to teach religion as to teach science in a religious spirit. It is more in the way they teach than in what they teach that they deserve to be called Christian schools."²⁴

When Patton assumed the presidency of Princeton Theological Seminary in 1902, he continued to give public, as well as more formal, addresses. On the occasion of the centennial anniversary of the New York Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in 1908, he told the assembled group how he, being an itinerant preacher, could use the same sermon over and over again. It became, he suggested, like a tailored suit to be properly fitted by the various congregations, altering it here and there and usually being advised to

²³ *The Duty of Self-Control*, 1898. Pamphlet in Speer Library. It is pertinent to note that some of the students whom Patton addressed were members of the Class of '92, the first class to have been in college during the first four years of his presidency. Ten years later, in June 1902, when they celebrated their decennial reunion, more than a hundred called on Patton in a body at "Prospect," the president's residence, elected him an honorary member of the class, and "received his farewell blessing." *The Princeton Alumni Weekly* (Vol. II, No. 36, June 14, 1902), p. 628.

²⁴ From the *Memorial Book of the Sesquicentennial Celebration of the Founding of the College of New Jersey and of the Ceremonies Inaugurating Princeton University*, published by the Trustees of Princeton University (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), pp. 36-37.

shorten the length. "By the time I've preached it fifty times," he said, "you can wake me up in the night and I can deliver it."²⁵

In giving the charge to his successor at the Seminary, J. Ross Stevenson, in 1914, Patton spoke of the growing place of practical courses in the theological curriculum. "Experience," he noted, "is the best and, in many cases, the only possible teacher. You cannot teach a child to walk by giving it lectures on walking; and in respect to many a question in the sphere of practical pastoral duty I am inclined to think that the only answer possible is '*solvitur ambulando*'—unless you happen to own a motor car."²⁶

One of the relentless duties every pastor must perform is the preparation of addresses for funerals and memorial services. It can never be an easy assignment, but it cannot be refused. Patton had a lesser share of such ministerial obligations, but he was frequently called upon to speak for distinguished friends and colleagues, and, as president of the Seminary, he stood in the position of pastor to the whole Seminary community. The fact that several of Patton's obituary addresses were printed testifies to the seriousness with which he took his extracurricular duties.

The memorial addresses, in the manner of the times, are eulogistic, but he would have agreed with the ancient rubric *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*, and he would have known both the Greek and Latin versions of the aphorism. Not of major or lasting importance as theological writing, Patton's memorials reflect a warm human heart very different from the personality revealed in his more austere doctrinal treatises.²⁷

IX

How, at this late date, are we to evaluate a person who seems in so many ways remote from our own times? At the outset, we suggested that Francis Landey Patton was something of an enigma. But he probably thought of himself as an uncomplicated person, laid-back as we would say today. He was essentially a reflective, contemplative person who preferred the quiet of

²⁵ *History of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church from 1808 to 1908*, privately printed, 1909. Pamphlet in Speer Library.

²⁶ *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, Vol. IX, No. 3 (Nov. 1915), p. 16. Patton's classical allusion is to Zeno's famous paradox of Achilles and the tortoise. The fastest human can never catch the slowest creature because, first, half the distance must be covered, but half of the first half must be covered and so on *ad infinitum*. The pragmatic answer: "It is solved by walking." This is a perfect illustration of Patton's point about experience being the best teacher.

²⁷ See, for example, *A Discourse in Memory of Archibald Alexander Hodge* (1887); *Caspar Wistar Hodge: A Memorial Address* (1891); *James McCosh: A Baccalaureate Sermon* (1895); *Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield: A Memorial Address* (1921). Pamphlets in Speer Library.

his study to the give and take of faculty or committee meetings. His management style tended to let things get worked out behind the scenes. It was contrary to his nature to provoke debate except when arguing about points of doctrine.

Critics at the University, including Woodrow Wilson and later historians partial to Wilson's brand of activism, thought Patton indolent and dilatory. They spoke of his "paralysis of the will." Wertenbaker, the Princeton historian, declared that Patton "lacked the persistence to put his own theories into practice" and that "he hated the manual labor of writing." Arthur Link, editor of Wilson's papers, states that the hopes raised by Patton for the University never materialized and led eventually to "bitter discontent" with efforts behind the scenes, led by Wilson, to strip Patton of his presidential prerogatives.²⁸

But it must be said that if Patton could scarcely qualify as a vigorous chief executive, whether at the University or at the Seminary, both educational institutions flourished during his tenure of more than twenty-five years. In the case of the University, six new dormitories were built plus a convocation hall, a new library, and a gymnasium. Entrance requirements were stiffened, the honor system inaugurated, and alumni representation on the board of trustees was approved. At the same time, the number of students and faculty doubled. As for the Seminary, the rate of development was less pronounced, but the student body during Patton's presidency increased by a third, new faculty members, such as Charles R. Erdman and Frederick W. Loetscher, were added. Several distinguished visiting lecturers came to the campus, such as Herman Bavinck, Louis F. Benson, Wilfred T. Grenfell, John R. Mott, James Orr, and Robert E. Speer.

Patton's disinterest in administrative leadership, which brought him into conflict with more aggressive faculty and trustees at the University, created less problem for him on the Seminary campus. Until his inauguration as president in 1902, the Seminary had operated without any administrative officers simply because there were two boards, trustees and directors, who were expected to oversee the financial and curricular affairs of the Seminary.

²⁸ Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters, Princeton 1890-1910* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1927), p. 17. Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, *Princeton: 1746-1896*, p. 367. *Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, Vol. 12, p. 289. Howard Segal, "The Patton-Wilson Succession," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Nov. 6, 1978, pp. 20-24. Segal repeats Wertenbaker's comment that Patton "hated the manual labor of writing." If he did, that didn't keep him from attending to his correspondence at his own unhurried pace. The Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library of Princeton University has sixteen big volumes of Patton's Letterpress correspondence, all but the final items transcribed in Patton's handwriting.

The board of directors acted somewhat like the session of a local Presbyterian church with the minister, in this case Patton as president, assuming the role of moderator or presiding officer.²⁹

Memorial minutes and nostalgic reflections, with their eulogistic and laudatory overtones, provide dubious data for evaluating such a controversial person as Francis Landey Patton. But it is important to note that Patton was fondly remembered by a host of former students and academic associates. At the time of his resignation as president of the University, a faculty committee prepared a formal minute, dated December 3, 1902, describing Patton's administration as "brilliant and successful" and noting "his unfailing courtesy to his colleagues." A member of the history department at the time, Alfred P. Dennis, writing about his memories of Patton years later, called him "Doctor Subtilis et Angelicus," combining the medieval sobriquets for Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas. With the later troubled Wilson in mind, Dennis notes that Patton "never attained the lofty heights of his successor, but he lived a happier man." Patton's close friend George M. Harper, who later became Woodrow Wilson professor of English literature, writing shortly after Patton's death in Bermuda, said: "Over and above his high positions, public honors, and official services, great as all these were, Dr. Patton's distinction lay in the beauty of his character. He clothed the superiority of his intellect with a modest demeanor."³⁰

Tributes from the Seminary when Patton resigned in 1913, and at the time of his death in 1932, are no less fulsome. Patton was doubtless more content in many ways at the Seminary. After all, the Seminary was a smaller institution with a more homogeneous constituency and a common Christian commitment to theological education and the ministry of the church. Rumblings of later disputes about biblical criticism could be heard, but the crisis of the 1929 disruption between "modernists and fundamentalists" was still some years beyond Patton's retirement in 1913.

At the time of his retirement from the Seminary, it was noted that Patton had "served the Seminary as professor (1881-1888), lecturer (1888-1902), and

²⁹ The two governing boards of the Seminary proved increasingly cumbersome, and in 1929 they were merged into a single board of trustees.

³⁰ *Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, Vol. 14, p. 256; Alfred P. Dennis, "President Patton," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Apr. 25, 1930, pp. 745, 747; George M. Harper, "A Tribute to Dr. Patton," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Dec. 2, 1932, pp. 232ff. Virtually every account of Patton makes mention of his public addresses. Mark Twain said that he "considered Dr. Patton the best after-dinner speaker he ever heard" (*Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, Vol. 14, p. 192). Even Wertenbaker, who had little use for Patton as an educator, conceded that "the fourteen years of his administration are among the most important in the history of the institution," *Princeton: 1746-1896*, p. 389.

president (1902-1913) unbrokenly for a period of thirty-two years." The faculty minute on this occasion stated that Patton "has won our admiration and confidence by his kindly and courteous deference to the opinions of his colleagues and by his wise counsel and guidance in the administration of the Seminary. . . . He has lived among us as our friend, who by his high ideals, his noble example, his kindness and thoughtful consideration has endeared himself to us all."³¹

The curious and disappointing aspect of Patton's long and varied career is the fact that the person of the theologian was somehow occluded in his doctrinal treatises. Patton the person was never allowed to enliven or humanize a rational apologetic for Christian faith. The rigidity of his theological system seems "out of sync" with the openness and easy tolerance of the person. It is a pity that the change which came over his person, including his dress and demeanor, did not accompany a corresponding mellowing in his theology.

Patton was, of course, fearful of any kind of subjectivism, and he would have resisted the notion that his own personality might infuse his theology with life and warmth. Theology, he would have maintained, is the dispassionate description of the doctrinal corpus bequeathed to us in Scripture and the creedal standards of the church. If we today take special interest in such Christian figures as Augustine, Francis of Assisi, Luther, Kierkegaard, Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mother Teresa, just to name a few, it is largely because we readily identify the person with the message. Patton would perhaps point to other influential figures, such as Tertullian, Calvin, Turretin, and Charles Hodge, again to mention only a few, because they did not allow their persons to be reflected in their thought.

This seemingly irreconcilable dialectic is still very much with us today.

A Personal Epilogue

For more than two years, I have worked on and off with the life and theology of Francis Landey Patton. I tried to read just about everything in Speer Library and in the Mudd Archive Library of Princeton University. I have visited Bermuda to make a pilgrimage to Patton's grave and to inquire

³¹ *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, May 1913, p. 6. Other issues of the *Bulletin* record the popularity of Patton's lectures both on campus and to church audiences around the country. He apparently had two frequently delivered sets of lectures, one on "The Authority of Religion" and the other on "Fundamentals of Christian Belief." The latter series was given in Atlanta, Baltimore, Detroit, Duluth, Milwaukee, New York, Springfield, Winona, and doubtless elsewhere. In their final form, they were delivered as the Sprunt Lectures in 1924 and published two years later as *Fundamental Christianity*.

at the Hamilton Historical Society about his final years. Members of the Patton family still live in Bermuda, and I have talked with Francis Landey Patton IV, who lives in Chicago. There is much more that could be done, but I hope this initial overall profile, the first so far as I know, will attract the interest of a graduate student or someone who can give time and attention to the research required for a fuller account of the social and religious history of Patton's times.

I began my reading of Patton with a strong theological prejudice against him. His doctrinal intransigence was completely unrelated to my own theological perspective which had been influenced by the Barthian neo-orthodox movement and the ecumenical theology of John A. Mackay. From Barth and Mackay, I sensed that the classic Christian faith based on Scripture and doctrine could be inwardly renewable and thus dynamic and contemporary. This, so it seemed to me, was what the Reformers had contended, namely, that the gospel can make all things new. Patton, apparently, had no confidence in the renewability of his tradition and seemed content with a static, unchanging orthodoxy. For him, theology must be "a mighty fortress" to defend and behind which to find security and invulnerability.

But if I share little sympathy with Patton's formal theology, I must confess that as I studied him and got to know him as a person, I became increasingly attracted to him for what he was and for his long and dedicated devotion to Christian truth as he saw it. I have come not only to respect him but to like him. From out of the past, I have found a new friend and colleague. As the old proverb has it: "From the fires of the past, carry the flame, not the ashes."

BOOK REVIEWS

Richardson, P., with David Granskou, eds. *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity: Vol. 1: Paul and the Gospels*. Studies in Christianity and Judaism 2. Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986. Pp. xi + 232. \$17.50.

Wilson, Stephen G. *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity: Vol. 2: Separation and Polemic*. Studies in Christianity and Judaism 2. Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986. Pp. xii + 185. \$17.50.

The first volume of *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity* contains an introduction by P. Richardson and twelve articles on anti-Judaism in the New Testament. W. Klassen provides a discussion of the state of the question. J. C. Hurd, L. Gaston, P. Richardson, E. P. Sanders, and D. Fraikin focus on Paul. C. P. Anderson, L. Gaston, S. G. Wilson, E. Buck, and B. Przybylski discuss the Synoptic Gospels. D. Granskou looks at the Gospel of John. The articles are frequently superb, exhibiting careful analyses, amassing of significant important data, and piercingly sophisticated conclusions.

The New Testament is full of anti-Judaisms; and these have led to diabolical relationships between Christians and Jews for almost two millennia. Exceedingly fecund for better relations is the insight that almost all of these derive from post-70 communities in which the Gospels were composed. The anti-Judaisms arise primarily because of a struggle not between Gentile Christians and Jews, but among Jews who believe in Jesus as the Messiah and other Jews who because of the destruction of the nation by the Romans in A.D. 70 were forced to develop a synagogal-based Judaism, shaped primarily by the Hillel branch of Pharisaic Judaism. Note these well-founded conclusions on Matthew: Buck, "We can only conclude that the contours of the antagonism which Matthew portrays in the trial scene reflect the conflict which has developed between church and synagogue at the time when Matthean Christology has become the accepted credal expression of the young church" (p. 178). Noting passages peculiar to Matthew, and arguing rightly for a Jewish-Christian setting for the final redaction of this Gospel, Przybylski concludes that the anti-Judaism in Matthew is the result of "an *internal* Jewish dispute" (p. 184, italics his; see pp. 195, 198).

The second volume moves the discussion from the first into the late second century. W. Klassen examines Hebrews, M. B. Shukster and P. Richardson the Epistle of Barnabas, L. Gaston Ignatius and related writers, S. G. Wilson Marcion, H. Remus Justin Martyr, and S. G. Wilson Melito. J. Lightstone explores the "Judaic Context of Early Christianity," and A. F. Segal "Judaism, Christianity, and Gnosticism." L. Gaston concludes the volume with a "Retrospect."

Most of the contributors to these volumes are professors who teach in Canada, and are specialists of the New Testament and Early Christianity. A. F. Segal is a Jew and a professor in the department of religion at Barnard College. These papers

are the fruits of a five-year seminar on "Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity." It was enriched by the McMaster University Project ("Normative Self-Definition of Judaism and Christianity"). These studies cumulatively show, in the words of P. Richardson, how "a group of Messianic Jews in the mid-first century became a triumphalist church which had turned its back on its source by the late third century."

The "Holocaust," the introspective sixties and early seventies, the appreciation of the common origin of Rabbinic Judaism and Earliest Christianity have forced upon us an awareness of the disturbing anti-Judaisms in the New Testament. We must be aware of a heresy of hatred of Jews in many works on Christian theology. These studies reveal that Christology is not inherently anti-Jewish (pace Reuther, who incidentally is not mentioned in Vol. 1). These volumes are highly recommended.

JAMES H. CHARLESWORTH
Princeton Theological Seminary

Segal, Alan F. *Rebecca's Children: Judaism and Christianity in the Roman World*. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard, 1986. Pp. xii + 207.

In *Rebecca's Children*, Alan F. Segal, professor of the history of religion, Barnard College in Columbia University, argues perceptively that both Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity are twins of the same mother, Hebrew religion (or Early Judaism). This argument is a major corrective to the old contention that Christianity derives from Judaism, as if Judaism was always singular and showed no signs of changing from the time of Ezra until the present.

The point needs to be stressed and repeated. Judaism and Christianity can "claim a twin birth. It is a startling truth that the religions we know today as Judaism and Christianity were born at the same time and nurtured in the same environment. Like Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebecca, the two religions fought in the womb" (p. 1). Segal is absolutely correct; and this new perception should help remove much of the anti-Jewish sentiment among Christians and much of the anti-Christian sentiment among Jews.

Segal also demonstrates that after A.D. 70 and the destruction of the Temple both Judaism and Christianity developed out of a much more variegated religion (or Judaisms). Each also helped form the other through polemical confrontation. The Gospels reflect hostility with the Jamnaic or Hillelite Jews; Rabbinic Judaism was also shaped by confrontations with Christianity.

Segal's understanding of the historical Jesus is complex. Gone, of course, are the dated Jewish invectives against a heretic or unrealistic moralist. Jesus is portrayed as the head of an apocalyptic movement, and he "spoke of himself as a 'son of man'" (p. 78). Segal wisely adds, however, that "what Jesus meant about himself is not at all clear." Jesus advocated "passive resistance," but he also "had strong feelings of scorn for the putative rulers of his country" (p. 81). While Jesus was "suspicious of" the rich, he did not come from the "lowest economic classes" (p. 83). He

was "a man of powerful charisma whose teachings were innovative and popular," and he yearned for "a quick apocalyptic end to this evil world" (pp. 86-87).

Segal has demonstrated the proper way to attempt a synthesis of the chaotic world out of which both Judaism and Christianity emerged. He writes well and has an amazing grasp of the problems. It is along the way being developed by Segal that relations among Jews and Christians can be improved.

JAMES H. CHARLESWORTH

Princeton Theological Seminary

Petzer, J. H., and P. J. Hartin. *A South African Perspective on the New Testament: Essays by South African New Testament Scholars Presented to Bruce Manning Metzger during His Visit to South Africa in 1985*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986. Pp. xii + 271.

It is always a great pleasure to discover the work of colleagues who share one's field of study and one's interests, and this volume by South African scholars is welcome because, with few exceptions, their work is not widely known here. A further reason for rejoicing is the warm recognition of Bruce M. Metzger which the volume brings, along with a useful presentation of his *curriculum vitae* and bibliography.

It is not possible to review the articles in detail. What is most striking about the collection is the shift of perspective which it reveals. With some exaggeration it can be said that none of the articles is primarily historical in focus, while the great majority are literary or semiotic studies.

Recognizing the injustice of this sort of classification, which cannot take account of the richness and complexity of the actual articles, we can none the less show the emphasis on literary and semiotic studies by grouping the contributions as follows:

Textual studies, 3 (J. H. Petzer on NT papyri, G.J.C. Jordaan on the Greek and Latin of the Codex Bezae, J. J. Janse van Rensburg on *nepioi* versus *epioi* in I Thess. 2:7);

Historical studies, 0 (Historical questions do frequently arise, and literary methods are sometimes used to support the view that the text in question is an early one);

Exegetical studies, 3 (J. C. Coetzee on *ego eimi* in John 8 and 9, P. J. Hartin on Eph. 1:10, J.H.L. Dijkman on *hoti* in I Peter);

Translation studies, 2 (J. N. Suggit on the Latin versions of the words of institution of the eucharist, I. J. du Plessis on Luke 7:35);

Literary and semiotic studies, 12 (H.J.B. Combrink on the changing scene in biblical interpretation, W. S. Vorster on the production and reception of a text [the Protevangelium of James], A. G. van Aarde on plot mediated through point of view in Matt. 22:1-14, P. J. Maartens on the Son of Man as a compound metaphor in Mark 14:62, J. P. Louw on macro levels of meaning in Luke 7:36-50, P. J. du Plessis on the Lamb of God in the Fourth Gospel, J. A. du Rand on plot and point of view in the Fourth Gospel, A. B. du Toit on hyperbolical contrasts in Paul, J. H. Roberts

on transitional techniques to the letter body in Paul, A. H. Snyman on stylistic parallelisms in I Cor. 13, J. van W. Cronjé on defamiliarization in Galatians, J. Botha on a stylistic analysis of the Colossians hymn).

It is not surprising that questions of translation appear with greater prominence in this volume than might be the case of a *Festschrift* written in the United States—a situation which is highly appropriate in view of Bruce Metzger's longstanding devotion to this field of scholarship. It is also worth noting that contact with scholars who are working in the field of translation (such as Eugene Nida) has been a principal channel through which modern linguistic and semiotic research has come to have an impact on these South African scholars. An example would be the frequent application of discourse analysis in these studies. Unfortunately, NT studies in the United States were all too long isolated from this channel.

One is also reminded by reading these scholarly studies that literary analysis, though it represents a new emphasis as a central and highly emphasized thrust of scholarship, has been a longstanding motif in NT studies. Some of the topics listed above have a long history in the discipline. It is good to see them reexamined with the use of the more recent methods.

Another mark of some of these studies is the bringing together of recent linguistic and literary methods with a reexamination of Hellenistic rhetoric. This latter tradition, with its strong emphasis on classification and organization of rhetorical devices, serves to fill in the more general rubrics of contemporary methods. If there is a danger here of losing sight of the forest for the trees, this juxtaposition is a very useful reminder that literary study has a long and valuable history, from which we are still learning.

It is a remarkable feature of contemporary NT studies that literary and linguistic methods are being embraced by conservative scholars, who find these methods fresh and liberating, while at the same time they do not have to be carried on in as embattled a fashion as was often the case with historical studies, where a certain result was often deemed to be the only theologically correct one. At the same time, other scholars find it helpful to use these methods, though they regard the NT as one document among others. It is good to see these very different points of view learning from each other, and on the whole more peacefully than could be the case in the high period of historical analysis.

The wide reading and competence of these scholars in the methods which they employ are admirable. If we were to ask about other methods that are coming to be used in NT studies in other parts of the world, we would find that sociological methods and liberation theology approaches are not emphasized here, nor is the preoccupation with "deconstruction" apparent. Though this latter is often not explicitly directed to social issues, and many of us find its more extreme applications highly questionable, by its nature it is critical of authority. Though some of the authors explicitly address the question of the contemporary meaning of the passage or book they are examining, a reader from outside South Africa cannot help notice

ing the minimal attention to those scholarly modes of study which attempt to grapple directly with the impact of the NT message on contemporary social conditions. This remark, however, is made with awareness of the real differences between the situation of NT studies in this country and in South Africa.

We are grateful to our colleagues in South Africa for this rigorous and stimulating collection of essays in honor of a scholar whose ecumenical and international interests have rightly brought him such widespread recognition.

WILLIAM A. BEARDSLEE
Emory University

Scott, Nathan A., Jr. *The Poetics of Belief: Studies in Coleridge, Arnold, Pater, Santayana, Stevens, and Heidegger*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985. Pp. viii + 198. \$24.00.

Some contemporary schools of thought, especially those associated with the movement broadly known as structuralism, have denied that the imagination plays an important role in human life. At the heart of the essays comprising the *Poetics of Belief* is a desire to challenge this view in the name of an imagination that enables humans to approach once again the Mystery of Being. A collection of studies, the book makes its case not by means of a systematically developed thesis but by examining the thought of six poets and thinkers who provide a number of illuminating perspectives on the imagination and its role in coming to terms with "What Is."

Before moving into these studies, Scott provides an introduction that does much to orient the reader. Here he announces his disenchantment with modern efforts to eliminate, or at least minimize, the imagination and sets forth a schematic understanding of the imagination's functions. The central dynamic of the imagination is its power to reach beyond the limits of the self. It is the "pushing of the mind beyond what is merely given, as it reaches intently after some fresh synthesis of experience" (p. 8). What this means for our relationship to the Mystery of Being emerges in a multifaceted way through the several studies that follow.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge had a tendency in his more philosophic writing to adopt, without appropriate acknowledgement, ideas and even whole passages from others, especially German philosophers such as Kant. Hence, many have accused him of plagiarism and dismissed his thought on these grounds. While it is not possible to deny that Coleridge did adopt much from others, Scott rightly points out that, since these ideas and passages were incorporated into Coleridge's unique system of thought, they were transformed into a part of his original contribution to our understanding of the imagination's powers (whatever may be the ultimate judgment on the accusation of plagiarism). In explicating Coleridge's contribution, Scott notes his distinction between the primary imagination (which enables our usual perception of the world) and the secondary imagination (which has the power to dissolve and re-synthesize our usual perceptions). The secondary imagination does

not seem to be aptly named since it is the power "to idealize and to unify," which enables us to see the world as a living unity of which we are a part, and in this process to come upon the reality of Being and hence of God.

Although many have dismissed Matthew Arnold on the grounds that he abandoned religious faith in the name of a confused and unconvincing mixture of poetry and morals, Scott argues that Arnold has been misunderstood, probably because he tried to mediate between religious traditionalists and the radical critics of religion, which pleased neither side. In the process, he attempted a "conservative reform" that took the form of an early program of demythologization. That is, Arnold maintained that biblical language is mythopoeic and hence must be interpreted in that light. It is the expression of an experience of "the Eternal not ourselves that makes for righteousness," and, if we are to recover that foundational experience, our own poetic imagination must penetrate these expressions to reach that from which they begin and toward which they move. In so doing, we cannot dispense with the biblical texts but must reinterpret them in a way that displays their meaning and efficacy for our own time.

The common charge against Walter Pater is that he promoted an aestheticism with strong tendencies toward hedonism. Scott, however, again fights the common view with an insightful interpretation of his own. In this case, Scott contends that the typical view of Pater arises from a failure to understand his insistence on the importance of paying heed to one's experience of the world; for in this way its grandeur can make itself felt, and we are made ready to receive intimations of transcendence within the world and to move beyond ourselves toward a community of love. Now, it is the role of poetic imagination to make us attentive in this way. Scott here tends to identify the views of Pater and Heidegger, which may be accurate, but he does not give adequate explanation or warrant, in spite of his appeal to T. S. Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent." Still, the overall argument of this essay is lucid and convincing.

The essay on George Santayana is a bit different from the others in that it does not explicitly dwell on the religious significance of his thought. It also engages in a polemic against structuralism, which in some ways makes this the most interesting essay in the book. The occasion for this polemic is Santayana's claim that, even though our knowledge of the world is inescapably perspectival, so that the world itself remains a mystery, it is nonetheless the knowledge of a reality that transcends our subjectivity. In this light, Scott sharply poses some questions to structuralist approaches (without claiming that Santayana provides a clear refutation of them) and passionately rejects the structuralist project, which in his view undercuts the humanistic enterprise.

The general understanding of Wallace Stevens is that he was an atheist who expressed his skepticism in his poetry. Again, Scott demurs and suggests a provocative interpretation that treats Stevens as a deeply religious poet. The religious dimension of his thought is often missed because he rejected the traditionalist notions

of God as *a* being "out there." On the other hand, his later poetry was designed to enliven our own poetic imagination, so that we will be more receptive to what we encounter in our world. If we can move in this direction, we will also be open to Being, the power "that enables all the various particular things of earth to be what their inner entelechies intend them to be" (p. 134). And, in affirming Being and the beings it empowers, one adopts an essentially religious attitude.

The last essay, on Martin Heidegger, forms an epilogue in which the various insights of the earlier essays are tied together. Although he gives some attention to *Being and Time*, Scott focuses mostly on the thought of the later Heidegger. Central to this thought is the notion that the poetic imagination serves to allow the world to manifest itself, that is, to let be what is. By being receptive to the specificity of each reality we encounter, we also become receptive to Being itself through these realities. That is, we become receptive to that which has been hidden by our tendency to treat the world as an instrument for our devices.

This brief review cannot do justice to the subtleties of Scott's analyses and arguments. He brings freshness of perspective, invigorating style, clarity, and insight to his exploration of each of these thinkers. Generally his arguments are solid, though at times they are a bit thin (e.g., as in his comparison of Pater and Heidegger). His breadth of knowledge and depth of analysis prove illuminating and stimulating. To be sure, he does not present anything like a systematic understanding of the imagination and its role in religious life and thought. On the other hand, he raises some important questions and provides suggestive stimuli for further thought. There are times when he seems to move away from his central insight that our relationship with the world is inevitably perspectival, and in his essays on Santayana, Stevens, and Heidegger the Christian tradition tends to fall from sight (it is more prominent in his treatments of Coleridge, Arnold, and Pater). Nonetheless, Scott has made an important contribution to our understanding of the imagination's role in human life and faith.

DAVID J. BRYANT
Eckerd College

Dickens, A. G., and John Tonkin. *The Reformation in Historical Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985. Pp. x + 443. \$33.50.

One of the characteristic marks of significant, complex periods of history, such as the Reformation of the sixteenth century, is that they acquire fluid traditions of interpretation which suggest as much about the "interpreter" as the "interpreted." Advocates and opponents of one or another facet of such a bygone age's interests quite early harden into "schools" with peculiar memories and emphases meant to glorify—or, as the case may be, vilify—that era. And these schools, like the ocean's tides, come and go with a rhythm not altogether their own. The Reformation is clearly no exception to this generality, particularly since confessional differences

hardened into almost canonical interpretations even before the first generation of Reformers was laid to rest.

Such is the expansive theme of this important study, accomplishing for the Reformation what W. K. Ferguson's *The Renaissance in Historical Thought* (Cambridge, MA: 1948) did for the preceding era. It is "historiography" in the widest sense, telling us not only about the past but about the ongoing grasp of that past upon succeeding generations and centuries. Historians of culture will, of course, find such a work engaging at almost every step. But it is a work of broader interest, exploring as it does the accumulating perceptions of an epoch whose hold upon us the centuries have done little to diminish. Such a study reminds us, if we had forgotten, that the pursuit of the past has everything to do with *our* vantage point, *our* prejudices, *our* concerns. It thus provides a fascinating record of the vicissitudes of cultural memory, understood in the broadest manner. And *our* vantage point and *our* memory—presumably, at least, as readers of this journal—have much invested in *this* particular past.

The Reformation in Historical Thought, a rare instance of a fully collaborative scholarly effort, pursues its task in the form of a double story of sorts. On the more straightforward level, Dickens and Tonkin begin their study where textbook surveys normally leave off—namely, with the reception of this period, and not with any bare recitation of dates, names, or events. It is a history of historical perception, surveying the checkered story of how later scholars and polemicists—in many cases, two descriptions of the same narrator—perceived the Reformation. In the opening section, entitled "Laying the Foundation: The First Century," they introduce us to the early writers, both Catholic and Protestant, for whom the writing of history was often either the enshrining of heroes or the demolishing of the perceived antichrists. This section underscores the historian's maxim—not yet scuttled by a generation like ours enamored with "direct" but too often superficial media—which would remind us that proximity to an event does not guarantee faithful reporting, and often is ironically a vexing barrier in this task. Chapters are devoted to the early controversialists, the martyrologies, and the widely differing efforts of French and Tudor historians. The second section focuses on "Reassessing the Inheritance: 1600-1840," including chapters on "An Age of Crisis" (seventeenth century), "An Age of Optimism" (eighteenth century), and the "New Directions" of the early nineteenth century, the period which one might have expected the authors to entitle "An Age of Historicism." The final section, "A Study in Contrasts: The Modern Era," examines more recent varieties of interpretation: viz., those scholars of the mid- and late nineteenth century whose commitment to history transcended polemics (without by any means eclipsing confessional allegiances altogether), Marxist interpreters, those interested in what transpired beyond the bounds of the so-called magisterial Reformation, and social scientists and social historians whose work continues to shape present perceptions of history in general and of the Reformation in particular.

So much for the "first level" of the story, in which the representation of the Reformation is a matter of *historical* perspective.

On the second level, Dickens and Tonkin as accomplished historians have complicated this plot with another stratum of nuance. The approach they have taken, which blends the discussion of the shifting horizon of the reception of the Reformation (Parts One and Two) with recent varieties of interpretation (Part Three), raises implicitly if not occasionally in more direct form the question of the very nature of history. Is there any such thing as "the" Reformation? Considered from a standard textbook vantage point, such a question seems pedantic, if not downright ludicrous; of course, there *was* a period, made up of men and women, lay persons and priests, victors and victims, which has come to be called by that name. Yet the shifting historical vantage points raise another issue, one which has obviously concerned these scholars in their broader careers as in this collaborative study: namely, the methodological issue of the adequacy of any *one* vantage point for grasping a movement as complex, polemicized, and creative as that which reformed the church (and broader culture) of the sixteenth century. Here the question is not that of actual proximity, which brought its own barriers and snares in an age not noted for objective detachment; rather, here we come face to face with the shaping power of the particular methods by which we choose to establish "historical proximity," if we might call it that. And on this point *The Reformation in Historical Thought* offers an extremely useful meditation, almost homiletic at times, on the nature of history as a discipline. Why do we choose the perspective we do? And what about the materials we select? Will we read only printed material, or choose other avenues to understand this era? Is this an age—unlike our own, apparently—moved by "sola doctrina," or doctrine alone? Or must we also consider social, economic, and political issues? Of course, the current trends of historical research would ask such questions with rhetorical (if not also occasionally dogmatic) force, assuming that these are indeed proper—or, variously, *the* proper—roads to follow in (re)assessing this momentous period of history. Such approaches illustrate, as these authors note not without a due measure of caution, "the undiminished fecundity and perennial fascination shown by the mighty theme of this book" (p. 321). As such these new and often contrasting approaches suggest something fundamental about the well-established nature of historical work, which "has always advanced by discovering new questions as well as new facts" (p. 320). New or at least changing historiographical approaches is what this groundbreaking study is all about. And, within this "second level" of this study, Dickens and Tonkin remind us that our historical perceptions inevitably tell us as much about the *past* as about *ourselves*. On this level, the representation of the Reformation is also a matter of *methodological* perspective.

The work closes with two provocative chapters, the first an epilogue of retrospective character entitled "A Living Tradition." In this short essay, Dickens and Tonkin describe their work metaphorically as a peering through a "slowly revolving kaleidoscope" (p. 324), warning against the dangers both of excessive subjectiv-

ism and of any presumed posture of objectivity in the historical task. Here they argue with those working in Clio's guild: in favor of placing studies of great specificity within the broader perspective (with Lucien Febvre); in support of collaboration with theologians who would remind us—rightfully!—that doctrine *was* at issue during this period and in its historical reception, even if this does not always suit modern sensibilities and prejudices; on the side of an engaged view of the past, which tries to enter through “a supreme effort of controlled imagination” (p. 328) a world often quite foreign from our own, yet not for that matter either less sophisticated or less “useful” for our own modern self-understanding. The final chapter comes in the form of an appendix in which Dickens and Tonkin offer a confession of their “Sins of Omission.” This concluding essay raises questions or approaches previously ignored, as well as sampling some of the more significant squabbles among members of the profession's ranks. It is a chapter of special interest to those either familiar with or curious about recent scholarly debates, though in some cases one is grateful that these have been limited by the brevity of an appendix. At this point, the reader will find some of the themes—i.e., those “reluctant and controversial omissions” (p. 331)—which would otherwise entertain reviewers of the work, or those more recent scholars who had not yet found their work duly cited. In any event, the whole project closes with a measure of circumspection and even humor, as the authors recall Luther's agony as a young monk in his own confessional, when he lamented that “some of man's misdemeanors are not even recognized, let alone remembered” (p. 351). Their story is far from complete, but then again this is what history is about: the never-completed story of the past, to which each succeeding generation (and critic) must contribute its own chapter.

This twofold story thus marks an important contribution not only to the field of Reformation studies, but to the broader arena of the history of culture. One senses again and again, when reading this study, that these scholars have joined to tell a rich story, one which suggests that their narrower professional interests in the Reformation itself have been carried on in more or less constant dialogue with earlier interpreters. Here their interest is not in the Reformation “*wie es gewesen sei*,” to borrow von Ranke's description of the historian's task; rather, their focus is upon how this epoch has been perceived as a necessary caution to our persistent attempts at simplifying and “controlling” this past. And, without intending to be “a quest of the historical Reformation,” it demonstrates the truth at the basis of Schweitzer's great work; namely, that succeeding generations always find some measure of their own reflection mirrored in their study of the past. By providing us with what they have called a “kaleidoscopic” insight into this particular past and the eras which followed, Dickens and Tonkin have told us much—though certainly not all, a point they are quick to concede—about the complexity of what we all too glibly call “the Reformation.” But they have done more than this: their work suggests not only that we have not yet finished with this past, but that this past has not finished with us.

MARK S. BURROWS

Wesley Theological Seminary

White, Ronald C., Jr., Louis B. Weeks, and Garth M. Rosell, eds. *American Christianity: A Case Approach*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986. Pp. xv + 188. \$11.95.

This compact book makes a good start toward the wider use of the "case study" method in the field of American church history. Twenty cases, prepared by twelve different authors (among them the three editors), are presented, from Anne Hutchinson to Billy Graham, most of them focused around a conspicuous figure. Cases vary in length from four to fourteen pages, and are somewhat uneven in quality and clarity. While some of the short ones are effective, the longest (Roger A. Couture on John Courtney Murray) is one of the best. The treatments are grouped in four sections (Origins, Early Nation, Religious Adolescence, Toward Pluralism); for each section there are some half-dozen pages of introductory text.

I have not yet had the opportunity to test the book in the way outlined in the general introduction, which suggests it be used primarily to provoke lively discussion in a framework focused by the case and requiring further preparation by both the students and the teacher. The former are urged to work cooperatively and imaginatively in advance of a session, for which a list of books, averaging six to seven entries each, is provided for each case. The latter is also encouraged to prepare teaching notes, plans, perhaps mini-lectures, and penetrating questions. I did require the work as a collateral reading in a three-week summer course, and it proved to be helpful in getting into the material of the field quickly, and assisted a number of the students promptly to locate topics for their papers, all of which were presented to the class.

The editors' introduction explains that the cases were generally constructed to follow the Harvard Business School "full text" method of focusing on a decision to be made, usually by the central figure, with material supplied so that the student can "enter vicariously into an historical situation." It is suggested that a four-point pattern be followed by the person who writes up a case. Unfortunately, the guidelines have not always been sufficiently followed, even in a free way, so some of the entries lack something in depth and focus. I disagree sharply with the editors' claim that "Footnotes would disrupt the flow of involvement in the case and have been omitted in favor of a selective bibliography at the end of the case." Well-constructed footnotes (much more than endnotes) can add important dimensions to a piece of historical writing and guide the student to find the way to central passages in the items listed in the selected bibliographies. Not all of the works mentioned will be in all libraries, however, and it would be helpful to have key materials identified for reserve and bookstore lists. Many of the cases studied have been left deliberately unresolved; this can serve as a useful pedagogical device, but I would like to experiment also with cases in which the decision is given so that the emphasis can fall on evaluating it and identifying the costs, as well as the historical importance and significance of what had been decided. Four of the cases are helpfully accompanied by "exhibits," usually relevant source materials.

The editors understand their stimulating book as a contribution to the use of inductive teaching in a time of methodological pioneering. While the value of centering on decisions is obvious, it does tend to focus attention on individuals much more than on groups. For church history, would it be useful to construct cases around some other approaches too, such as a "position" as developed by certain churches, confessional parties, or denominationally related institutions? Such a case could then be used as a lens to study forces that led to the position's adoption, alterations in its interpretation and texts, and its significance in history. Might other cases be organized around some theme related to a liturgical practice, or a specific work of religious art or music?

This approach seems to me to be sufficiently promising that we can hope for other, perhaps longer works, which might have space for the ten- rather than the four-five-page entries (though several of them were very well done), and allow for more exhibits. Also, some illustrations of the formats students have created for introducing a case, and of the teaching notes, plans, and penetrating questions instructors have prepared would be illuminating for helping those of us who have not used this method extensively before. This book has made the case method "come alive" for me in a way several "formal" discussions about it have not, and I look for further resources as this approach continues to be tried, criticized, and developed.

ROBERT T. HANDY
Union Theological Seminary
New York

Mandelker, Ira L. *Religion, Society, and Utopia in Nineteenth-Century America*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984. Pp. 181. \$22.00.

Early nineteenth-century America brought forth a number of religious sects and utopian ventures—a fact which moved Ralph Waldo Emerson to write in 1840: "We are all a little wild here with numberless projects of social reform. Not a reading man but has a draft of a new community in his waistcoat pocket." One of the better known of these utopians was John Humphrey Noyes. Believing that the Second Coming had already occurred in A.D. 70, Noyes thought Christians no longer dwelt in an age of promise but in the time of fulfillment. They could now live in accordance with the perfect righteousness of the Kingdom of God. Noyes concluded that perfection required an unselfish common life marked by a sharing of goods, the abolition of monogamous marriage, and the practice of scientific human breeding ("stirpiculture"). In a commune started in Vermont in 1838 and later moved to Oneida in western New York, he sought to put these perfectionist ideals into practice. Many other communitarian efforts quickly petered out; but Oneida endured, even prospered for a period of time, although it, too, eventually lost its original impetus. The attack on private property and monogamous marriage

ceased, and a once religious enterprise was converted into a secular joint stock company with shares distributed to members.

Ira Mandelker sets out to retell this familiar story from a new angle of vision. In contrast to most accounts which stress the organizational strengths and flaws of Oneida, his analysis emphasizes the role of ideology. Using Max Weber's theory of the interaction of religious and secular values, Mandelker contends that Noyes' perfectionism was an effort—ultimately unsuccessful—to bridge the gap between the two. Mandelker examines various tensions between the sacred and profane in nineteenth-century America: tensions with regard to economics, democracy, sexuality and family, and science. In each instance, Noyes' theories temporarily overcame polarity, but in the long run engendered new forms of the fundamental tension between religion and the world. Thus the successes—as well as the ultimate failure—of Oneida are traceable to ideology.

When it was submitted as a dissertation in sociology at the New School for Social Research, Mandelker's work received an award for excellence; and it indeed deserves high marks on several counts. His effort to take seriously the power of ideas in history is commendable, and likewise his impressive synthesis of a number of disparate nineteenth-century trends. Moreover, his notion that Noyes' perfectionism was an effort to collapse the distance between religion and the world is a suggestive analytical model, useful not only for the Oneida community, but also for utopian movements in general. Finally, the boldness of his theoretical generalizations is refreshing in an age whose scholarship is increasingly characterized by narrow monographs advancing modest theses.

But Mandelker pays a price for his boldness. His readings in nineteenth-century religion and culture are spotty. Especially noteworthy is his failure to consider several recent detailed studies of the Oneida community. As a result, his theories sometimes resemble ideal types whose exact connection to real persons and events is dubious.

JAMES H. MOORHEAD

Princeton Theological Seminary

Dykstra, Craig, and Sharon Parks, eds. *Faith Development and Fowler*. Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1986. Pp. 322. \$14.95.

If you have been wondering what all the fuss over James Fowler's "faith development theory" is about, this is the book to read. Even those who disagree with his definition of faith, who consider it wrong to think in terms of the "development" of faith, or who have reservations about his research method owe a debt to James Fowler of the Center for Faith Development at Candler School of Theology. His research and writing have stimulated serious theological reflection about faith and ministry.

This book is a collection of essays written by scholars in Christian education,

philosophy of education, psychology, pastoral care, and Christian ethics. It is divided into five sections: faith and the structuring of meaning, by Fowler; evaluating faith development theory; enhancing faith development theory; faith development theory and ministry; and a response by Fowler. While the level of discourse is fairly theoretical, readers will be drawn into reflection about their assumptions concerning how persons become faithful Christians.

During the last ten years, Fowler has written three books and numerous articles about his theory and research. Although he has not tested his hypothesis with cross-cultural research, he claims that his descriptions of the characteristics of six stages of faith hold equally well for all religions. His critics have always raised some form of the same question: How can "faith" be universal and particular at the same time? Are not the very concepts he uses in describing the structure and stages of faith the products of Western culture and the Jewish-Christian tradition? For Christians with theological commitments different from those of Fowler the question becomes that of how they would define Christian faith. The value of the book lies in the variety of ways the essay writers evaluate and respond to Fowler's work.

Craig Dykstra argues that Fowler's treatment of faith as "a generic human phenomenon" is quite different from a specifically Christian definition of faith as "appropriate and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God" (p. 55). According to Dykstra faith is a possibility in human existence, but not a necessity. Fowler believes that faith is "a human universal" because he defines faith as "the making, maintenance, and transformation of human meaning" (p. 15). According to Fowler, faith includes relationships between "the self, others, and centers of supra-ordinate value."

Fowler conceptualizes faith as a human activity that can have different referents. But he assumes that all people, whether they are self-consciously religious or not, have "faith" that is grounded in "the sovereignty of God." For religious people, God is a center of supra-ordinate value. For Christian people, symbols like "the Kingdom of God" point to a center of supra-ordinate value. Thus, when he describes structural stages of faith he considers the structures capable of containing quite different contents concerning "centers of supra-ordinate value."

The issue here is whether a structural theory of faith is adequate to the particular contents of Christian faith, namely that Jesus Christ is Lord. In his synthesis of seven different aspects of human development has Fowler provided a way in which Christian educators can more accurately conceptualize and foster Christian faith? Or, is this attempt to bring together the theories of such well known developmental psychologists as Piaget, Selman, and Kohlberg under the rubric of "faith" inadequate to the task of Christian education?

Students of H. Richard Niebuhr are fond of saying that "good sociology is good theology." Sharon Parks tells us that "Fowler is first a theologian and ethicist and then a psychologist and social scientist" (p. 143). This is fair. Fowler's larger project,

like that of his professor and mentor Niebuhr, is the attempt to resolve the dilemma of the meaning of Christian revelation in a pluralistic culture through the use of sociology and theology. It is the utility of this synthesis that is challenged in the pages of this book.

A lack of attention to the role of conflict in the deepening of Christian faith has been noted in several essays. This criticism is of importance to Fowler's use of developmental psychology and to his theology. Unlike Erik Erikson who cites the possibility of growth or regression at a time of transition, Fowler describes only characteristics of growth in each of his six stages. Carl D. Schneider says that Fowler presents each stage as an "achievement" and fails "with an almost phobic avoidance . . . to name the opposites. . . . Theologically, we might state this in terms of the inadequate doctrine of sin and evil in Fowler's theory" (p. 247).

Several writers suggest that, despite all claims to the contrary, Fowler's theory partakes of the spirit of modern rationalism and is bound to lead to the pursuit of individualist status-quo politics despite Fowler's theological commitments to social justice. Parks suggests that "the Kingdom of God," a focal symbol for Fowler, may work against, rather than for, his commitment to prophetic action by Christians. She proposes that "... one test of a religious image is its adequacy within differing stages of faith development and its capacity to serve ongoing faith development. The image which is fitting to ongoing lived faith experience must be able to meet us where we are—to be assimilated, to comfort. But it must also confound. It must educate us; it must lead us out; it must require our accommodation, our development, our transformation" (p. 153).

Maria Harris expresses appreciation for the way in which Fowler tries to express "faith knowing" as both "passional and rational." Yet she urges that there are still more imaginative and artistic ways of "knowing" to be explored. Harris is uneasy that the theory is in many ways influenced by male theologies that were responding to masculine issues and climates. She asks, "... is our understanding of faith, as well as our understanding of sin, drawn exclusively from male experience?" "Could future interviews . . . be designed to focus more on the relational, corporate, and political construing and forming, and less on the individual than is the case thus far?" (pp. 126-27).

The dialogue that occurs as Fowler responds to two essays by Dykstra is worth the price of the book. Their conversation provides a model for future discourse in the field of practical theology. The dialogue is scholarly, concrete, and related to the practice of ministry. Despite disagreements about how faith is defined, Fowler is warmly appreciative that "Dykstra has carefully attended to what I have tried to say about religious education and faith development theory and [has put] his understanding of my position together in one place" (p. 290).

In his essay about the application of faith development theory Dykstra makes "a contribution of fundamental importance" by showing how faith development the-

ory can be an important conversation partner in clarifying the theory of religious education. He demonstrates how the seven aspects of faith used in Fowler's theory can be used as a "hermeneutic device" to understand people. In his introductory essay Fowler includes a chart and description of the characteristics of the seven aspects for each of the six stages of faith. The seven aspects include attention to form of logic (Piaget), role-taking (Selman), form of moral judgment (Kohlberg), bounds of social awareness, locus of authority, form of world coherence, and role of symbols.

Dykstra finds Fowler's descriptions of these stages useful in training pastors and educators to see aspects of faith they might otherwise overlook. He describes how the stage characteristics indicate when persons are ready "to do and be and respond in new ways." As he does this he shows how faith development theory can be used to clarify the purpose of religious education defined in terms of maturity of faith. This definition can be used as a criterion for evaluating educational efforts; it can give pastors and educators a language with which to evaluate "qualitative competences" required for the realization of "normative Christian faith" at various levels.

Dykstra organizes what Fowler has said about two kinds of transformation of faith—development and conversion—into a theory in which he outlines the process necessary to movement in faith "transformations" (pp. 263-65). He points out that it is important to educators to be able to "see and discriminate between" the two kinds of transformation so they will understand "what is going on inside of people as they change." This is important knowledge for pastors. They, too, need to have a theory of growth in the Christian life that informs the way they carry out the tasks of ministry.

It is not uncommon to hear pastors say that seminary professors do not relate their knowledge of the theological disciplines to the practice of ministry. Every seminary curriculum should teach pastors and educators to be self-conscious and critical of the psychological and theological assumptions they bring to their practice of ministry. They need to have a critical awareness of the way they define faith, how they understand the potential for growth in Christian faith commitments, what they hope will happen in the lives of members of their congregations. The essays and dialogue in *Faith Development and Fowler* include enough attention to these issues to stimulate critical reflection in the reader. The book could be used in the classroom, for continuing education, or in pastor/educator discussion groups.

JANET F. FISHBURN
The Theological School
Drew University

Anderson, Ray S., and Dennis B. Guernsey. *On Being Family: A Social Theology of the Family*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1985. Pp. 168.

The task these two professors from Fuller Theological Seminary set for them-

selves is very worthy. As they survey the available works on the family that deal with it from a Christian point of view, they find a lot of popular works that are "biblically superficial and theologically shallow," "naively influenced by psychology," and "culturally encapsulated" in the American middle class. Anderson and Guernsey, who team-teach a course on the family, want to provide something that has none of these faults, yet speaks intelligibly to Christians in a way that draws theological and psychological insights together responsibly and helpfully.

The effort is a partial success. The chapters by Anderson, who is professor of theology and ministry, are full of helpful insights. He maintains a consistent theological stance throughout, one which is developed creatively and in some detail. An obvious Barthian, Anderson conceives of the family as a covenant partnership, the nature and "quintessential order" of which lies in God's creative and redemptive action. What makes things interesting about this is the developmental character of the way we discover our election through the daily choices we make and interactions we have as family members. This makes it possible for Anderson to talk about "spirituality as a domestic skill" and identify clearly the constructive role parents and children may have in each other's spiritual formation. By adding this developmental theme, without reducing it to a series of stages marked out by a developmental psychology foreign to his own vision, Anderson is able to make sense of the personal and social dimensions of sanctification in a way that Barthians usually seem constitutionally unable to pull off.

The only chapter by Anderson that does not seem to go anywhere is the one on marriage, which fails to take seriously the whole host of issues that contemporary potential and actual marriage partners must face. Instead, it exhausts itself in an inconclusive discussion of Barth's position in *Church Dogmatics* III/4. In addition, Anderson does not succeed in breaking out of cultural encapsulation. Nothing here suggests that he has anything besides the modern, Western, middle-class, nuclear family in mind.

Anderson's contributions are hardly biblically superficial or theologically shallow, though they do not range as widely as one might hope. His essays will not attract a popular audience, but they are still quite readable. The sum of the matter is that his half of the book would be a worthy addition to a seminary syllabus or a pastor's bibliography on the topic.

Unfortunately, the book limps badly when Guernsey's chapters are factored in. For the most part, they are brief, jargon-filled statements on the broad topics Anderson has already more ably and thoroughly introduced. Presumably, Guernsey, who is certified in marriage and family therapy and directs Fuller's Institute for Marriage and Family Ministries, is commissioned to add the social psychological dimension. His offerings are not well integrated with Anderson's. Indeed, Guernsey sometimes blatantly contradicts what Anderson has said, without ever seeming to notice it. Anderson, for his part, pays no attention to Guernsey. The results are

unfortunate. They suggest that cross-disciplinary dialogue beyond the polite mutual occupation of a common classroom or a single volume is either impossible or not worth the effort. Neither is the case, but obviously this particular pair is not up to what it requires.

CRAIG DYKSTRA
Princeton Theological Seminary



PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY 1988 SUMMER SCHOOL and BIBLICAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM

June 6–July 29

Biblical Hebrew, Princeton Theological Seminary staff; **New Testament Greek**, Princeton Theological Seminary staff.

June 6–24

Jesus Within Judaism, James H. Charlesworth; **An Introduction to the Orthodox Tradition**, Paul Rorem; **Latin American Liberation Theology**, Daniel L. Migliore; **Ministry with Youth**, Freda A. Gardner; **Understanding Church Growth and Decline**, John R. Hendrick

June 27–July 15

Old Testament Theologies of War and Peace, Ben C. Ollenburger; **Creeds and Confessions, Canons and Decrees in Christian Theology from 1500 to 1650**, Edward A. Dowey, Jr.; **Vital Parish Education**, D. Campbell Wyckoff; **Preaching on Special Occasions**, Wade P. Huie, Jr.; **The Congregation as a Complex Organization**, Geddes W. Hanson; **Pastoral Care and the Life Cycle**, Donald E. Capps

July 18–August 5

The Interpretation of Paul's Letter to the Philippians, Steven J.

Kraftchick; **Paul Tillich: Theologian of the Boundaries**, Mark Kline Taylor; **Preacher and Poet Dialogue**, Christine M. Smith; **Teaching in the Church**, Donald Griggs; **Systems of Pastoral Marriage and Family Counseling**, Brian Childs; **Skills for the Resolution of Congregational Corporate Pain and Lab II—Developing Leaders for Lab I in Calling and Caring Ministries**, John S. and Joyce Savage

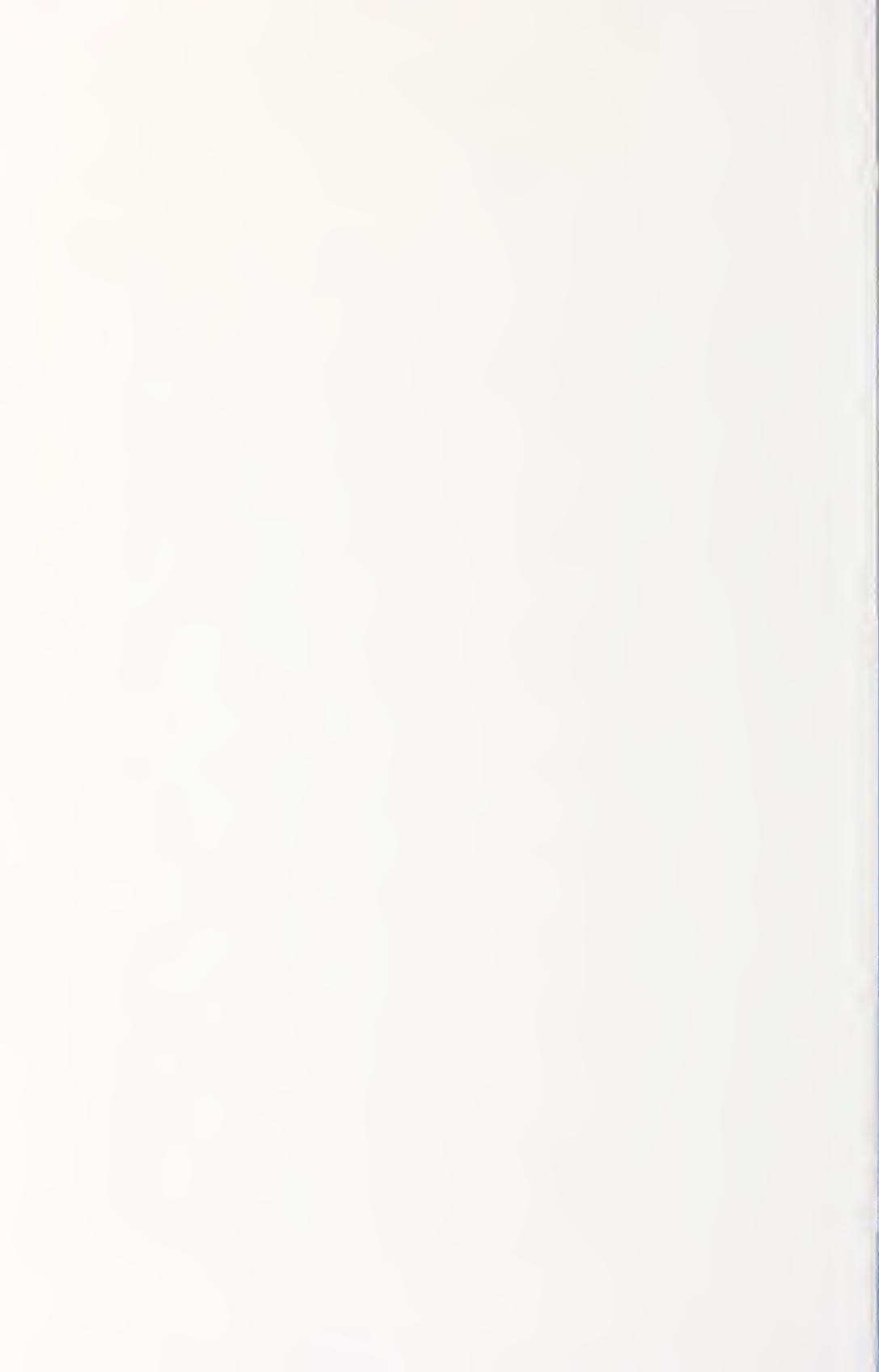
August 1–5

(followed by a month of independent study) **Foundations of Spirituality**, Diogenes Allen; **Shattering Images: the Christian Dialogue with Buddhism**, Donald K. Swearer

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